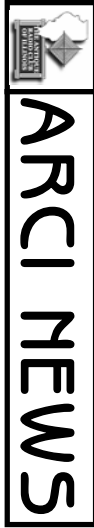


**RADIOFEST 2013
REPORT INSIDE**



Antique Radio Club of Illinois
PO Box 1139
LaGrange Park, IL 60526

 Affiliated AWA
Antique Wireless Association

ARCI NEWS

www.antique-radios.org

Volume 33, Issue 5
October 2013

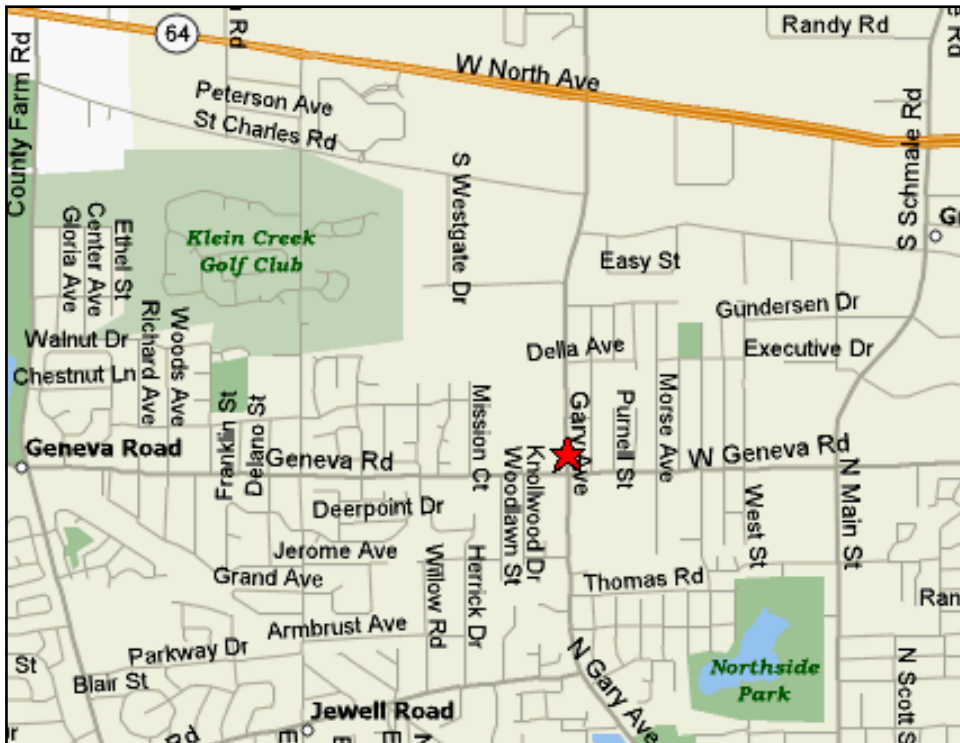


MORE RADIOFEST 2013 PICTURES INSIDE

UPCOMING OUTDOOR MEET OCT. 6, 2013

AMERICAN LEGION HALL
 570 South Gary Avenue, Carol Stream, IL
October 6, 2013
7AM – 11AM

Business Meeting & Elections 9:30AM
 Boy Scout Pancake Breakfast / Free Coffee, Juice & Cookies
 50/50 Cash Drawing Raffle



2013 MEETING SCHEDULE

October 6, 2013	7AM-11AM Outdoor Swap Meet Business Mtg./Officer Election 9:30AM	American Legion Hall Carol Stream, IL (See Map)
December 8, 2013	7AM-11AM Indoor Swap Meet Business Meeting 10AM	American Legion Hall Carol Stream, IL (See Map)

WISCONSIN ANTIQUE RADIO CLUB, INC.

The next WARCI meeting will take place Sun., Sept. 22 at “The Terminal”, located at 5917 South Howell Street in Milwaukee near the airport from 7AM-11AM. For information about the club, please contact President Greg Hunolt at ghunolt@excel.net or see the web site at www.warci.org.

NORTHLAND ANTIQUE RADIO CLUB

NARC’s annual meeting and election of officers will be held at the Pavek Museum of Broadcasting in St. Louis Park at noon on Sep. 15. As in past years, an old radio swap meet will be held outside in the museum parking lot prior to the meeting. For information, see <http://www.northlandantiqueradioclub.com/index.shtml>.

MICHIGAN ANTIQUE RADIO CLUB

MARC’s fall meet will be Oct. 20 in Kalamazoo, Michigan. Details will be announced. For more information please see www.michiganantiqueradio.org or contact Mike Dale at 734-439-0834.

INDIANA HISTORICAL RADIO SOCIETY

The IHRS Fall Foliage Meet will be on Oct. 12 at 8:00am at the Riley Park Shelter, Greenfield, Indiana. (One block north of US40 on Apple Street.) For more information please see <http://www.indianahistoricalradio.org/ihrsched.htm>.

CLASSIFIEDS

For Sale: High-end audio capacitors "jb JFX Premium Metallized Polypropylene Film Capacitors". These are for use in high-end Radios/Stereos/ Hi-Fi/ Audio/Speaker/ Amplifier/Juke-Box, etc. applications. Available in virtually every uF size 0.0005uF thru 47uF at 400V and 630V. Please contact Dave Cantelon, 6 Ferncrest Gate, Scarborough, Ontario, Canada, M1W 1C2 ; phone 416-502-9128. Email: justradios@yahoo.com or visit WebSite: <http://www.justradios.com/>

BUSINESS CARD ADS

We invite all of our members to scan and send in your business card to be included in *ARCI News*. For \$80 your card will appear in the next 6 issues! As we gear up for ARCI's 30th anniversary celebration at *Radiofest*, your card will be seen by approximately 400 people per issue and up to 1,000 people at *Radiofest* where we make additional copies of *ARCI News* available at no charge. If interested, please scan your card and send it to jbart64@sbcglobal.net and mail a check for \$80 to Rudy Hecker, ARCI Treasurer, 127 Weymouth Court, Schaumburg, IL 60193. Thank you all for your continued support of ARCI!!!



Just Radios

Capacitors & Schematics for Tube Radios

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Pioneers of Wireless exhibit at the new AWA Museum.

The enthusiasm level was extremely high and AWA attracted a range of people from across the world to its Convention. Look for significantly more information about AWA and news about next year's 2014 Convention on its website at <http://www.antiquewireless.org/>.



The very first RCA portable television camera at the new AWA Museum.

CLUBING AROUND

ANTIQUÉ WIRELESS ASSOCIATION

The AWA will hold its annual membership and board meetings on Sun., Nov. 3 at the Media Center (Bldg. 2) of the AWA's Antique Wireless Museum complex at 6925 Routes 5 & 20 (intersection with Rt. 444) in Bloomfield, NY. All members are welcome. Dues are \$25 per year. For more information, please see www.antiquewireless.org.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Another *Radiofest* has come and gone. When people ask me how I feel about *Radiofest 2013*, I can answer in a single word: "Proud!" I am proud of the outstanding job each of the volunteer groups did in organizing, performing and rising to the occasion when problems presented themselves. From swap meet layout, registration, the auction, program forums and speakers, to the atrium display, the contest, ladies luncheon, the vintage ham station, the banquet and program, rainstorm recovery, down to the donation auction, it was admirably "WELL DONE!" On behalf of all ARCI, I extend my thanks and admiration to our volunteers for a job well done.

Now, what do we do for an encore, next year? Plans will begin taking shape at the October meeting, looking at a number of issues. The election of officers comes next. Current officers are being canvassed to determine whether they will be available for another term. I am seeking a person to step in as President. If there is a volunteer willing to accept the "opportunity", please let me know immediately. I call it an opportunity, because it is really is. It has been one of the most gratifying and rewarding ventures I have undertaken. My "return on investment" is beyond measure. Our team of dedicated volunteers has made it so.

Another concern is the location for *Radiofest 2014*. The ARCI Board of Directors and Officers wish to remain at the Willow Brook location. We have enjoyed an excellent working relationship with the hotel and its staff. The pricing structure and facilities are well suited to our needs. We believe the hotel management wants to continue the relationship with ARCI. We will continue to work with the incoming owners in an attempt to firmly secure the location for next year. The Board recognizes that we must have a firm agreement with the operators of an acceptable hotel site by early January 2014 at the latest. Stay tuned. Recommendations are welcome.

I am looking forward to our next Sunday morning meeting on October 6. It will be an interesting meet, with all the latest developments. Bring along an entry for the People Choice Contest, and if early autumn house-cleaning yields something for the donation auction, bring that along too. Remember - ARCI is your club! Please let me know if you have any suggestions. You can email ARCI's web site address clubinfo@antique-radios.org or you can email me directly at oshuler@comcast.net.

See You At The Next Meet, 30 & 73

OLIN SHULER W9PCD

ARCI PRESIDENT

IMPORTANT UPCOMING BUSINESS MEETING OCTOBER 6, 2013

Every October, ARCI conducts its annual Officer Elections. ARCI will conduct its annual business meeting at 9:30am on October 6, 2013. At that time, we intend to discuss planning for 2014 and we will hold officer elections. We strongly urge all interested members, Officers and Board members to attend. ARCI's slate for 2013-2014 is as follows:

Board of Directors

Dr. Barry Janov, Chairman
Jeff Aulik
David Bart
Art Bilski
Harry Blesy
Tom Kleinschmidt
Steve Muchow, Advisor
Robert Piekarz

Officers

Olin Shuler, President
Jim Novak, Vice President
Keith Schreiter, Secretary/Membership
Rudy Hecker, Treasurer

ARCI has been fortunate to have wonderful leadership over the years, but new blood is needed to preserve the vitality and initiative of one of the best radio collecting clubs in the country. WE NEED YOU!!! We intend to review *Radiofest*, local meets, *ARCI News*, and other key services for 2014. We will also discuss the planning for *Radiofest 2014* which is already underway. ARCI is your club!! Please plan to participate and lend a hand! See you at the meeting!!

VOLUNTEERS FOR 2012

ARCI has been fortunate to have a great team of volunteers over the years who have faithfully and generously served the club. They deserve your thanks and recognition for all the support they provided. Remember, ARCI is your club and we need your help too! As we all pitch-in, the club will continue to improve for everyone's benefit. Please talk with one of the officers, Board Members or current volunteers for more information on how you can join-in to lend-a-hand. ARCI looks forward to working with the following during the upcoming year.

Greg Hunolt, *Radiofest* Program Chairman
Jim Novak, KC9IPB Ham Radio Station
Ed & Judy Huether, *Radiofest* Coordinators
Rudy Hecker, Signage, People's Choice Contest
Art Bilski, Public Relations
Ron Steinberg, *Radiofest* Audiovisuals
Karl Johnson & Pete Nauseda, Parking, Information

Jim Sargent, *Radiofest* Auctioneer
Tom Kleinschmidt, Donation Auction
Janet & Jack Lavelle, Hospitality
Chuck Schwark, Webmaster
Bill Smith, *ARCI Newsletter* Publisher
Julia Bart, Registration, *ARCI News* Editor

HEALTH & WELFARE



Donna Schoo.

ARCI is very sorry to report the passing of long time ARCI member Donna Schoo. Donna was a long time volunteer working with her husband Dan Schoo as the ARCI photography team. We will all miss Donna and her quiet but always happy presence at ARCI. We extend sincere condolences to Dan and the rest of the family in this sad time.

DONNA M. SCHOO, 60, of DeKalb, Illinois, formerly of Dunmore, Pennsylvania, passed away peacefully Saturday, September 7, 2013, at home, in the company of her husband and family. Born in Scranton, Pennsylvania, Donna and Dan were married on June 8, 2002, at St. Mary of the Assumption Catholic Church,

A highlight of the conference was the grand re-opening of the Antique Wireless Museum at its new location in Bloomfield, New York. The AWA formally dedicated the Thomas Peterson, Jr. Antique Wireless Museum and Research Campus on August 20 with about 150 visitors on the first day. Development of the full complex is showing tremendous progress, and the first phase of the main museum is now open. When fully developed, the 10,000 square foot museum will feature a 60-seat auditorium, live operating radio stations, 14 permanent and 26 rotating exhibits, full handicapped access, professional conservation climate controls and fire-flood safety measures along with ample parking for cars and tour buses. The open portion of the new museum fills approximately 1/3 of the main building. The remaining 2/3 is scheduled for the additional phases of the build-out over the next several years. The Dr. Max Bodmer Media Center (holding the Bruce Kelley Library and the Radio Club of America Archives) has been open since 2009, and the Gauss Road workshop is in heavy use.



An authentic replica of a 1925 radio store at the new AWA Museum.

The AWA also launched its new website in conjunction with the conference. The website "A New Beginning..." is significantly redesigned and updated to include current information, resources, the bookstore, links to other organizations, photos of recent events and membership information. A particular highlight is the new interactive map of the museum which has photos of the exhibit installations. The AWA plans to continue developing and expanding the content of the website, so comments and return visits are encouraged.

College football was prominent. Northwestern, Illinois, and Notre Dame games were well-covered, especially home games. Rose Bowl, Sugar Bowl, and Army-Navy games were carried by the networks.

As you might guess, 160 plus magazines of 16 to 20 pages contain enough information to make a summarization go on and on. I have gone on and on; there is more I haven't covered, but I will finish this with my expression of appreciation for your attention to this scan of an example of an extremely popular interactive media situation that occurred long before "interactive media" became created as a phrase.

MUSEUM NEWS

An Occasional Column Featuring Museum
Related Topics
By David & Julia Bart

AWA MUSEUM OPENS AND NEW WEBSITE LAUNCHED

The Antique Wireless Association held its 52nd Annual Convention on August 20-24. The Conference was well attended by ARCI, Radio Club of America and AWA members. The featured program topics included Heathkit, Lee deForest, WWII television, Enigma code machines, WWII military radio, and overviews of Australian and Swedish radio museums. The contest room featured a record breaking 84 displays; and, the international dinner, the flea market, book fair and large auction were all well attended.



An authentic replica of the Titanic Marconi Room at the new AWA Museum.

DeKalb, where she was an active member of the parish, serving on the Liturgy Planning Committee and as a Eucharistic Minister. Donna was employed at the University of Scranton for 29 years before moving to DeKalb in 2002. Donna was a member of the University of Scranton Pro Deo et Universitatea Society. Most recently, she was employed as a clerk in the Registration and Records office at Northern Illinois University, DeKalb. She is survived by her husband Dan, her mother, father-in-law, sister, three brothers, nieces and nephews, aunts, uncles and many cousins.

Visitation took place at Anderson Funeral Home and the funeral Mass was September 10, at St. Mary Catholic Church with interment at St. Mary Catholic Cemetery in DeKalb. A memorial mass will be celebrated for Donna in Dunmore, at a later time to be determined. For information, visit www.AndersonFuneralHomeLtd.com or call 815-756-1022

The family has requested donations in lieu of flowers be sent to the KishHealth System Cancer Center; 10 Health Service Drive, DeKalb, IL 60115; 815-748-2967; <http://www.kishhealth.org/donate/>.

THE RADIOFEST 2013 REPORT

By Olin Shuler

RADIOFEST 2013 WAS A HUGE SUCCESS

Radiofest 2013 celebrated Radio's Golden Age - 1938. It was the year radio reached the state of maturity that carried it admirably through World War II. Attendance was gratifying, with selling spaces running somewhat above the previous 2 years. Yes, it was a success. The swap meet sellers made the meet worthwhile for all of the attendees. Graced by cooler weather this year, morning sales were active both days. It was a definite pleasure to walk down the aisles under bright sunny skies shining down on an array of bargains.



Jim Sargent

As usual, Jim Sargent and the auction team were the first event at *Radiofest*. A most inspiring sight was noted by the auctioneer and the folks on the auction platform at the opening of the event. After reminding the audience, that in the earlier days of broadcasting, the National Anthem was played at morning radio station sign-on and night sign-off, the Anthem was played in the room at full parade loudness. The audience rose and stood, at first, with a rather relaxed posture. After the first few bars, the audience posture began to change and by the end everyone was standing tall displaying the body-language of strong and proud people. Truly inspiring! The auction was a success, selling 180 lots, netting the sellers a little over \$26,000 - a near record for the club.



Weather-wise, visitors from Colorado would have felt right at home, especially on Friday when a Midwest version of a Rocky Mountain afternoon thunder storm came through. Some of the tents took on a little damage and water, including the vintage ham station tent and the donation auction tent. Our sellers showed their tenacity, weathering the storm, albeit with near heroic scrambling. I believe none of them left because of the storm. Some of the equipment in the vintage ham radio tent did get wet, but it appears that after drying out, no damage was done. There was a scramble at the donation

auction tent to get “perishable” items into an enclosed bed pickup truck. We filled the truck and I never saw the rear bumper of an S-10 pickup set that low before. We unloaded the truck the next morning, placing the items in the warmth of the sun and by auction time, no one suspected what happened the preceding afternoon.

ARCI has a commitment to radio industry history and education. This was fulfilled with well qualified speakers covering a variety of subjects: Vacuum Tube Audio, Loudspeakers, Ham Radio Forum, A Radio Clinic Under The Big Top, and Briggs and Stratton in Radio. And a presentation and book signing by author Cam Trowbridge highlighted his book “Marconi, In Business and Politics.” The forums brought a wealth of information and were well attended.



The Atrium Display featured displays in line with the 1938 theme. That was the year the movie “The Big Broadcast of 1938” brought Bob Hope onto the scene, and along came Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy, and later the famous Orson Wells’ “War of the Worlds” broadcast. It was also the year Motorola entered the home radio field. The display showed a good mixture of advertising posters, magazines and great looking radios from the year that the green tuning-eye reached its peak of popularity.

Featured items included sections on Charlie McCarthy, Motorola, Zenith, radio premiums and Arturo Toscanini and the NBC Orchestra. A second display was featured in the contest room highlighting Lincoln’s Telegraphers and the Morse Telegraph Club. This was the 150th anniversary of Gettysburg and the Emancipation Proclamation. A large display about civil war telegraphy and the signal corps went hand-in-hand with live working demonstrations by the Morse Telegraph Club. I was struck by how well attended and how interested our members were in all the exhibits.

Although WLS did not carry the virtual wall-to-wall soap operas that WBBM and WMAQ did Monday through Friday, over 15 per day per station, they did have the popular Ma Perkins and Pepper Young’s Family in the mornings. The magazine reported that Proctor and Gamble sponsored 73 programs weekly on the NBC Red and Blue networks alone.

As did most stations in those days, the station carried a great variety of special events and speakers on a large number of subjects, including health, gardening, government, education conventions, child raising issues, and business. College debate teams covered current political and economic issues.

Special events carried included opening ceremonies for the 1936 Olympics, frog jumping contests, Queen Mary’s first voyage, and a sun eclipse tracked from several locations.

Due to an infantile paralysis concern in 1937, the beginning of school in September was delayed for several weeks. During those weeks, WLS and 5 other Chicago stations broadcast class sessions. Chicago newspapers printed the class schedules.

The 1937 flood of much of the Ohio River valley was described as the then largest natural disaster to hit the United States. WLS listeners contributed more than \$100,000 for relief of citizens of Indiana and Ohio. During those years, 25 cents was a significant amount of money, and probably was about the average size of the flood contributions.

In 1934, WLS received 1,051,041 letters. One week they received over 67,000, partly due to a contest or premium offer. They did schedule occasional contests with prizes that are negligible by today’s standards.

Occasionally, a doctor or hospital would call the station about a need for donations for blood for specific patients. One such call for the needs of a boy resulted in about 200 volunteers calling the hospital or station within an hour or two.

The station regretfully announced that it could not broadcast missing person reports as several hundred people disappeared monthly into a metropolis the size of Chicago. Hopefully most of the disappearances were temporary as newcomers hoping to make their fortune likely had some very haphazard employment and residence situations in their early days in the city.

Although WLS did not have many live play-by-play sports broadcasts, Stand By! listed the events carried by other stations. Baseball wasn’t mentioned; broadcasts of every game every year did not go back as far as less frequently occurring events did. Events carried by other Chicago stations included rowing (Yale-Harvard, the Poughkeepsie Regatta, Oxford-Cambridge), horse races, amateur boxing championships from Yankee Stadium, the Bears versus the College All-Americans, tennis (the Forest Hills National Championships, now the U. S. Open, and the international Wrightman Cup), the National Air Races, boxing, the national softball tournament, and the Indianapolis 500. Sportscasts were mainly on WGN, WMAQ, and WBBM, the same stations if not the same call letters as today. WGN carried the Bears and all Blackhawk home games.

farming and a lot of fun for some as well. Gardening tips for farm and city dwellers were popular. Listeners sent in seeds and plants for identification, and sometimes samples of crops for the staff to identify or enjoy. A plant grown from seeds dropped by migratory birds was one enigma to be solved and identified by the highly-regarded WLS agricultural experts.

A major block of farm-related programming beside the early morning hours was another hugely popular noon time Dinner Bell Roundup, with more live country music and much more farm news, including the stockyards and grain exchange prices of that morning.

One annual highlight of the WLS agricultural emphasis for several years was the National Corn Husking Contest. The contest held in Fountain County, Indiana in November 1935 had 110,000 attendees. Apparently it was great entertainment with no admission charge. The 18 best huskers from 9 states husked for 80 minutes without a break, up to 50 ears a minute. Due to a lot of practicing at his farm at home for many weeks, the 1935 winner set a world record of 36.9 bushels husked in his 80 minutes. The proceedings were broadcast on WLS, of course.

Matters of faith were an important aspect of broadcasting in those days when most country music programming on any station included a hymn toward the end of each hour. WLS had morning devotions daily, a Sunday School review program on Saturday morning, and several hours of Christian programming on Sunday morning. All of the devotional programming, including the Sunday morning block, was live and in studio. Remote broadcasts from local churches and national religious programming was not a part of WLS in those days. In addition to the religious music provided by the station organist and almost any of the other staff musicians, Dr. John W. Holland spoke daily, and was deeply appreciated by many listeners as a source of comfort and encouragement.

WLS carried several newscasts daily, 5 to 15 minutes in duration. At that time, news on the hour or on the half-hour had not been initiated on any stations, and definitely all news all the time stations were still to be formatted. Stations had three or four shorter newscasts daily, but network stations carried some high profile commentators on the news nightly. WLS, being replaced by WENR most evenings, does not appear to have had a national commentator during the mid-thirties. Of course, its farm news was extended during the breakfast and lunchtime shows, likely not limited to 15 minutes when the markets or weather or farm-related events were newsworthy.

WLS newsman Herbert Morrison is still remembered for his recorded broadcast made while he watched the Hindenburg zeppelin burn and crash on May 6, 1937. His comments, which can still be heard on records and the Internet, start with a description of the awesome sight of the beautiful slow-moving air balloon approaching its New Jersey landing field. When it suddenly began to burn and came down, he became very excited naturally, and he uttered his famous phrase, "Oh, the humanity, the humanity." After breaking down, he turned away to compose himself, but soon turned back to finish the report. He had flown to New Jersey from Chicago to report the landing, and his recording was sent back to WLS for broadcast the next day, the only eyewitness radio report, I believe, and certainly the first broadcast. Mr. Morrison received a Pulitzer for that event which he would have preferred to miss.



The contest entries at antique radio meets are always interesting from a historic standpoint. Being able to examine the technology from decades past is always a treat. I admire the collectors' skill in locating, restoring and displaying their radios. This year a special treat was in store, with a comprehensive display of early 1920 radios and components made by Briggs and Stratton; yes the lawn mower engine people. As if just having some radios there was not enough, there were advertising display boards and components on display bearing the BASCO name, over a 3 year period. I had seen the BASCO name on vintage parts from time to time, but never suspected that BASCO was Briggs and Stratton Company.

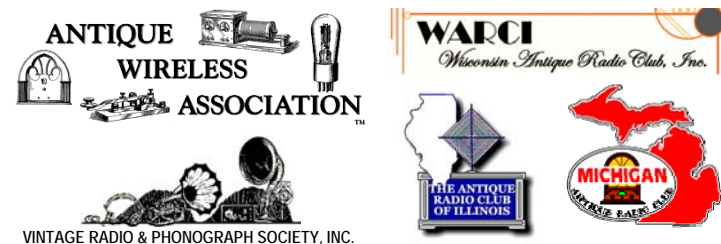
The Friday night banquet drew its usual nice sized crowd, to enjoy a good meal and honor our volunteers, and guests. As our special guest we welcomed and honored Ray Schulenberg, the electrical designer of the first broadcast FM automobile radio. He was the engineer at Motorola that was selected for the assignment in 1959. His radio, Model FM-900 was on display in the Atrium. Banquet guest speaker, Jim Wades, President of the Morse Telegraph Club, described his adventures as technical consultant for two recent motion pictures relating to the telegraph scenes in "Lincoln" and "The Lone Ranger". His description of behind the scenes activities held the audience attention in a manner seldom seen.

Saturday morning dawned clear and bright. Swap meet sellers were open and the Donation Auction started on time, clean and dry. There was a wide assortment of items that sold well, netting a little over \$1,200 for the club. ARCI extends a hearty "thank-you" to the donors.

Activities began to wind down by about 10:30 AM and by noon most of the sellers were taking down tents as were the ARCI volunteers, preparing to clean up and depart. A few hours later a small group of stalwarts gathered for a late lunch and planning for 2014 began. What a great event we all shared, and see you all again next year!

FIVE CLUBS CONTINUE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Radiofest continues to have a national reach and typically attracts international participants. Our attendees this year included people from Canada, Australia, France and more than half of the United States. *Radiofest* is the product of five major clubs, spanning New York to Texas. We thank each of these organizations for all their hard work!!



ABOUT THE AUCTION

Jim Sargent, returned this year to call the auction, and Greg Hunolt and the auction volunteers tracked the auction with new software, revised methods and much improved processing. Registration flowed seamlessly; the auction started on time, and was a resounding success. We had 145 persons participate this year, the same number as last year. We had 58 sellers, up from 54 last year, who sold 222 lots (up from 194 last year and 157 in 2011) for total sales of \$26,480 (up from \$25,300 last year and \$16,400 in 2011) at an average sale price of \$147.93 per lot (down from \$176.92 last year, in part because we did not enforce the \$25 minimum, but up from \$136.29 in 2011). Some data on auction sales and detail for the top 15 lots by selling price follows below.

<u>Auction Results</u>	<u>Lots</u>	<u>Avg Price</u>
Hammer Price > \$300	20	\$650
Hammer Price \$200 - \$300	15	\$235
Hammer Price \$100 - \$200	36	\$152
Hammer Price \$ 50 - \$100	43	\$65
Hammer Price < \$50	65	\$26
Totals	179	\$148
No Sale	43	
Total Auction	222	\$26,480

<u>15 Top Priced Lots</u>	<u>Price</u>
Crosley Coloradio Sign	\$1,600
Ozarka Cathedral Receiver	\$1,600
Sott All-Wave 23.Receiver	\$1,250
Zenith Sign	\$1,100
Martian Beauty 1-tube Receiver, 1924	\$900
Detrola 219 Super Pee-Wee Receiver	\$800
Hot Spot 14, 1927, with extras	\$750
RCA 66X8 Catalin Receiver	\$500
Western Electric 387 Carbon Microphone, 1929	\$425
Western Electric 19 Broadcast Monitor	\$425
Neutrowound Receiver, 1924	\$400
Tri-City Steinite Special Receiver, 1922	\$400
Wireless Improvement Co. BC-9A Radio Trans and Rec, 1921	\$400
Neutrowound Super 6 Receiver	\$375
Zenith Chairside AM/FM/Phonograph, 1946	\$375



George D. Hay already calling himself the “Solemn OI Judge” at the age of 30, first started at WLS. Others Saturday night programs heard for decades beginning in the twenties and thirties include the Louisiana Hayride on KWKH, Shreveport, the Midwestern Hayride WLW, Cincinnati, the Saturday Night Jamboree, WWVA, Wheeling, and the one I grew up with, The Missouri Valley Barn Dance, WNAX, Yankton, SD.

Groups of WLS Barn Dance performers were booked for various venues almost every night of the year at high school auditoriums and other venues throughout a dozen states, and as far away as the Oklahoma State Fair in Tulsa. Typically 20 performances of WLS Minstrels were scheduled away from Chicago weekly.

Famous or moderately famous WLS performers or guests appearing on the Barn Dance included frequent visitor Gene Autry, regulars Pat Buttram, Red Foley (first of a three generation set of music chartists, his son-in-law being Pat Boone, his granddaughter being Debbie Boone, good for a trifecta of number ones on three charts, county-pop-Christian), Arky the Arkansas Woodchopper, the Novelodeons, Jimmy Dean in his pre-sausage days, the Maple City Four, Patsy Montana (one listener wrote that she had written down the date and time of over 700 hundred songs Patsy sang over WLS over the years), the Hometowners, the Sod Busters, the teen-age George Gobel (long before his Mean Old Alice days), the Prairie Ramblers, the beloved Lulu Belle & Scotty, the Hoosier Hotshots, Uncle Ezra, and Smiley Burnette.

Most, if not all, of the music on WLS was country. The NBC Symphony was on WENR, and popular music was left to other Chicago stations. Listeners’ letters were almost unanimously in favor of old time music (country), and no other. Occasionally, someone would write in asking for a greater variety of music and would get resoundingly berated in subsequent letters, many in the vein of “Don’t you have a way to change stations on your radio if you don’t like WLS music?” One listener requested much less yodeling and again yodeling was supported in later editions. Popular music and jazz was referred to as new music. One columnist described some jazz as reminding him of the noise that would be made if a truckload of empty milk cans ran into a freight car of hogs on the way to market.

Farm families far and near were not the only deeply appreciative listeners. Many letters came from aged or disabled shut-ins whose radios made a huge contribution to their quality of life. Each year the magazine listed hundreds of radios that WLS donated to orphanages, hospitals, senior citizen homes, veterans’ homes, and schools. A picture was occasionally published showing groups of grateful orphans or others, some as far away as Nome, Alaska.

In addition to Saturday nights, WLS broadcast live country music every morning for several hours, interspersed with farm market news, other news, weather, and chit chat. A studio organist and story teller, named Ralph Waldo Emerson after his ancestor essayist and philosopher was a popular daily performer. Weather for the ships on the Great Lakes was presented daily for a time, and its cancellation was objected to greatly.

Farm news was huge. Livestock and grain prices were as interesting to many people as the Dow Jones average is to many of us today. Crop predictions, agricultural advice, and down home events in various areas were essential for the business of

power and scope of WLS, broadcast after midnight, so those who did broadcast during the night throughout the country could be heard at tremendous distances. Some Chicago stations in the twenties even voluntarily ceased broadcasting Monday evenings so that Chicago listeners could catch signals from other cities. This was reciprocated by other cities that had different nights of silence.

WLS was heard to some degree throughout the country. It was not always possible to tell if listeners writing in had heard WLS or had heard its Saturday Night Barn Dance which was carried, in part, by NBC and its increasingly numerous affiliates. Many listeners in Alaska or Montana didn't really care about the details; they heard WLS one way or another. But responses to non-network programming came from people in the Atlantic seaboard states, the far West, and from several Canadian provinces. New Zealand and Australian listeners were also heard from. Listeners wrote from Hudson Bay and Churchill, Manitoba. We can only imagine how appreciated radio was in those Arctic places, which were actually probably pretty good locations for catching North American and European signals.

Some of the many drop-in visitors to the station were reported such as the group of Wyoming sheep men who had accompanied several rail car loads of lambs to the Chicago Stockyards (then the largest in the country, handling 11% of the nation's meat). The Wyoming men dropped in to say hello to one of their sources of farm news and music and to say that they were on the way to Detroit to buy about a dozen new vehicles for citizens of their town, using the lamb sales proceeds. Stand By! reported this as a wonderful example of capitalism in action; during those dismal depression years, good economic news was highly regarded when it could be found.

Groups visiting the station included schools, scout and Brownie troops, the baseball Cubs, and the hockey Blackhawks.

Now that we know what could be read in the station magazine, let's get on to what could be heard on the station.

Music is the most famous aspect of the WLS Prairie Farmer years, specifically that which is now known as country music. Then it was more often referred to as hillbilly, Western, or barn dance music. Interestingly, in its next format under different ownership, WLS was also famous across much of our country for music, its very popular rock n' roll and Top Forty programming, in the fifties, sixties, and seventies.

Saturday nights on WLS were huge. Taking over from WENR at 6:30 p.m., Saturday night programming segments typically included the Keystone Barn Dance Party, followed by the National Barn Dance at 7:30 carried by NBC Blue nationwide. Winding down the evening with local programming again the Prairie Farmer program came on at 8:30 with many of the same performers and the same music as the earlier segment. Special nights, like New Year's Eve, had additional programming segments such as the Prairie Ramblers with Patsy Montana and Red Foley and the Hoosier Sod Busters, or the Hoosier Hot Shots, the Barn Dance Jamboree, Barn Dance Varieties, or the Aladdin Hayloft Theatre.

The Barn Dance was held in the Eighth Street Theatre, and usually sold out at about 2000 tickets weekly. Admission was 50 or 75 cents.

Broadcasting a Saturday night barn dance was not limited to WLS, although it was one of the first. One of the early famous WSM Nashville Grand Ol' Opry emcees,

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR



Jim Novak (L), accepts the Volunteer of the Year Award from ARCI President Olin Schuler (R).

well deserved and very special Thank You on behalf of everyone at ARCI for your years of continued service and your many generous contributions to the club.

The ARCI Volunteer of the Year Award was created to recognize individuals who, through their efforts, have made significant contributions to the organization in support of our avocation, our club and its activities. This year's Volunteer of the Year Award went to Jim Novak for his years of service to ARCI, operating the June combined hamfest and meet with the 6-Meter Club, ongoing contributions to the ARCI News with his hamshack column, and operating the ARCI ham station at Radiofest. His many hours in these efforts are greatly appreciated by everyone. Jim is also the President of the 6-Meter ham club. We want to give Jim Novak a

RADIOFEST HAM STATION - A WEATHER VICTIM

ARCI's KC9IPB *Radiofest* ham radio station unfortunately fell victim to the weather this year, but not before about two dozen contacts were completed on Friday. Things started out fine, with Chris Farley, KC9IEQ bringing out his nice Johnson Valiant and National NC-300 for the AM station, and Ed Schumacher, WA9GQK contributed his unique and nicely crafted hand wired version of a Hallicrafters HT-37, plus a Drake R-4 receiver, for Single Sideband operation. Jim Novak, WA9FIH brought a vintage Heathkit two meter FM radio, plus the antennas. Chris also provided the tilt-up mast supports. Everything was performing well until the second violent storm blew through around 3 p.m. Friday, knocking over and destroying the pop-up canopy over the equipment and blowing off the tarp over Ed's radios. Although it looked as though Ed's equipment took an unwelcome bath, surprisingly after wiping them off and drying them thoroughly at home, Ed was happy to report that they all appear to be working well with no apparent damage! Needless to say, KC9IPB was not on the air Saturday morning. But in the true ARCI spirit of camaraderie and friendship, Bob Piekarcz donated a canopy to replace the one that was destroyed!

OTHER AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

Each year, ARCI tries to thank all those who contributed to the success of the club. It takes the efforts of many people to make our club function. We graciously and gratefully recognize these individuals annually at each *Radiofest* during the Carolyn Knipfel Banquet. On behalf of the ARCI Board of Directors and the membership, congratulations to everyone for their many contributions in achieving a very successful year for ARCI and an outstanding *Radiofest 2013!*

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Jim Novak: Vice President
Keith Schreiter: Secretary/Membership
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Radiofest Contest

Barry Janov, Jeff Aulik, 3 Anonymous Auction
Judges

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Julia Bart, Judy Huether: Registration
Judy & Ed Huether: Coordinators &
Registration
Ron Steinberg: Audio & Visual Equipment
Rudy Hecker: Signage & Prizes
Karl Johnson & Peter Nauseda: Parking
Tom Kleinschmidt: Donation Auction
Staff: John & Laurie Bart, Mike Bart, Eli Paweleck, Brompton Jackson, Sarah Schwuchow

Display – Radio In 1938

David & Julia Bart, Bill Ross, Barry Janov, Jay Volke, Al Jespersen, Dale Boyce

Display – Lincoln's Telegraphers

David & Julia Bart, Jim Wades & Morse
Telegraph Club

Radiofest Speakers

Greg Hunolt, Pete Nauseda, Karl Johnson,
Terry Shaver, John Stone, Dale Boyce, Bill
Ross, Cam Trowbridge, Ed Huether, Jim
Wades

Special Event Radio Station, KC9IPB

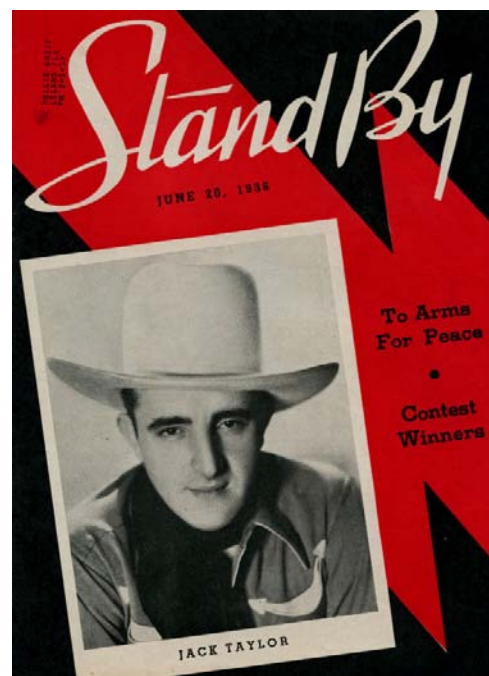
Chris Farley, KC9IEQ; Jim Novak, WA9FIH;
Ed Schumacher, WA9GQK

and NBC Blue as NBC WEA. While of not much interest to many listeners, others (such as the kind I would have been) were intrigued by all of this and indicated that by their questioning letters. Obviously one of the greatest services rendered by Stand By! in addition to publishing its own program schedules, was its printing of some news of other stations, and its network listening suggestions including some Mutual and CBS programs never carried on WLS. Also, the CBS New York flagship station was sometimes mentioned, WABC. As the ABC network and company did not exist then, CBS owning WABC was not remarkable. Today it would be puzzling; the New York flagships today are WABC for ABC and WCBS for CBS.

One of the station news items published was that Fort Wayne, IN now had 2 new NBC affiliates. WOWO would be NBC Blue; WLL would have an option of NBC Blue or NBC Red. Even a radio detail hobbyist like me would be puzzled by that time. After those years of ample NBC possibilities, it is a somewhat remarkable that it has been several years since NBC has had any radio presence whatsoever.

As mentioned previously, Stand By! was not bothered in the least by mentioning the competition. Chicago stations mentioned in various contexts included WGN, WCFL (now WMVP), WSBC, WBBM, WMAQ (WSCR now at that frequency), and long-gone stations WOK, WQJ, WBCN, KYW whose call letters now reside in Philadelphia, WGES, WIBO, WAAF, WEBH and the greatly missed by some of us, WJJD.

A diversion here: my favorite call letters at one time or another included WREN, Topeka because of its musical symbolism, and WIND, Chicago because of its reference to the magic of sounds being carried through the air. Not too long ago, I found out that it was named WIND because its transmitter was originally located in Indiana (IND), bit of a disappointment, that. Its first call letters were WJKS and it was licensed as a Gary station. Stand By! refers to it as WIND, Gary.



*June 1936 Issue of Stand By with
Jack Taylor on Cover.*

Some of the interest in station news on the part of WLS listeners and subscribers is that DXing (DX being radio shorthand for distance) was a big part of the early years of radio broadcasting. The frequencies were much less crowded in the early decades of broadcasting than they were later, so distant stations were easier to catch. Quite a few stations were on frequencies occupied by no other station anywhere in the United States or Canada. Also many of today's sources of interference and static were absent or less intrusive back then. Few stations, including those of the

RADIOFEST WINNER'S CIRCLE EQUIPMENT CONTEST WINNERS

Radiofest held its annual Old Equipment Contest in August under the direction of Jeff Aulik and Barry Janov. Many great entries were submitted and quite a few rare items were on display. Congratulations to everyone on all the fine entries, and of course, congratulations to the winners!!

Dr. Ralph Muchow Best of Show Award & People's Choice Award

Dale Boyce, Briggs and Stratton Display

Chairman's Award

Jay Volke, GE AR 1300 and AA 1400 Receiver and Amp/Detector

Best Historical Display Award

Bob Sands, German Nazi Radio Display

During the second year of Stand By! classified ads began to appear, and soon filled an entire page. Ads ranged from corporate (ways to make money, health remedies) to individual (need a live-in maid, have a farm for sale). A couple of comic strips were carried from time to time, always humorous, usually making sport of hillbilly ways and speech.

One of the curiosities of early broadcasting was the situation of frequency sharing. That meant that more than one company broadcast on the same frequency, obviously at different times. I do not know if any frequency sharing now exists; about ten years ago there were still some sharing cases in Kansas and Texas. Chicago had one frequency, 1240, which for many decades until not too long ago had 3 stations; WSBC, WEDC, and WCRW. They usually broadcast in a variety of mostly European languages which may explain to some of you why they don't sound familiar.

WLS shared 870 and later 890 kilohertz with WENR, another venerated but now silent set of call letters, until the late 1950's. I remember hearing station identification announcements as WLS WENR Chicago often, although I presume that during certain hours the calls were announced separately. What were those hours? Well, they could puzzle an average listener and I expect many did not care as long as they were hearing something of interest to them.

The schedule for much of the time-sharing period for WLS was: Sunday, 7 a.m. to 11 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m.; Monday through Friday, 5 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.; and Saturday, 5 a.m. to 3 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. to 11 p.m. The daytime gaps and the last evening hours except for Saturday belonged to WENR. Although some technical and managerial employees of both stations knew and interacted with each other, the stations were entirely separate entities with offices and studios at separate locations. Although the magazine did not list all the WENR programs, its WLS schedule did show "sign off for WENR" at the appropriate spots.

If listeners cared about stations and networks, they had to pay attention. Besides hearing two sets of call letters on the same frequency, another confusing factor was the NBC Red and NBC Blue network situation. In the 1940's the Federal Communications Commission ruled that NBC improperly owned two networks, the Blue and the Red. So NBC (National Broadcasting Company) spun off its Blue Network which was named ABC, (American Broadcasting Company) shortly thereafter and which continues as such today.

Before the spin off, NBC moved programs from one of its networks to the other at its managerial discretion. The unofficial practice was that the better programs with the more famous performers and the higher ad rates were on the Red network; Blue carried the B list. Programs were moved from Blue to Red or from Red to Blue depending on schedule issues, sponsor and listener attitudes, and subjective opinions as to which programs were better than others.

In Chicago, NBC Red was usually carried by WMAQ and NBC Blue by both WENR and WLS. So WMAQ had Fibber McGee and Molly while WLS frequently broadcast programs almost no one remembers now. Programs sometimes moved from WMAQ to one of the other two and back again.

Adding to the confusion, the first issues of Stand By! for about a year referred to the NBC New York feed stations so NBC Red references were printed as NBC WJZ

Radios Made in Midwest

- 1st - Dale Boyce, Briggs and Stratton Display
- 2nd - John Reinicke, Howard 901A

Vintage Audio

- 1st - Geoffrey Bourne, McIntosh MR 55 and MR 71
- 2nd - John Reinicke, Radio Craftsmen Concerto

Speakers

- 1st - Jay Volke, Metro Cone Speaker

Ham/Military Radio

- 1st - Bill Ross, Japanese 94-6 Tranceiver
- 2nd - Ed Schumacher, Stromberg Carlson BC348P
- 3rd - Joe Knight, BCL and SWL Card Display

Advertising

- 1st - Fred Prohl, Perryman Tube advertising

Radios Pre-1930

- 1st - Jay Volke, GE AR 1300 and AA 1400 Receiver and Amp/Detector
- 2nd - John Reinicke, Deforest D10 Receiver

Radios 1930-WWII (1945)

- 1st - Bob Sands, German Nazi Radio Display
- 2nd - Jay Volke, I.C.A. Companion Radio

Radios Post-WWII (>1945)

- 1st - Jim Novak, Crosley JM8-BN
- 2nd - John Reinicke, Motorola Dynatac Sample

Open Category

- 1st - Erich Brueschke, Dick Tracy Display
- 2nd - Jay Volke, Protone Minifon
- 3rd - Connie McCartney, Homebrew Crystal Set With Speaker

COLLECTOR'S CORNER
An Occasional Column On Radio Collecting
By David Bart
TWO GREAT DISPLAYS AT RADIOFEST



This year there were two theme displays at Radiofest – *Radio in 1938* and *Lincoln's Telegraphers*. This was the 75th anniversary of 1938, so the special atrium display featured items from that memorable year including a large collection of Charlie McCarthy items, Zenith radios, Motorola radios and the first FM car radios, Toscanini and the NBC Symphony

Orchestra, plastic and catalin radios, a collection of Radio News and Radio Retailing and Radio Today magazines, and a display of radio premiums. This year was also the 150th anniversary of Gettysburg which coincided with the release of the movie *Lincoln*, so a special display about Lincoln's Telegraphers was combined with live



demonstrations by the Morse Telegraph Club in the contest room. The Lincoln exhibit included rare documents, telegrams, letters, photos and books, telegraph keys and telegraph registers from the Civil War. A special thank you goes to all who participated in putting together these two outstanding displays. Additional photos are available on the ARCI website at www.antique-radios.org.

the largesse of WLS contributions, womens' clothing designs, and electronic gear like remote broadcast trucks.

A regular feature was a musical library page. The content of that page did not necessarily involve the music heard on WLS, but consisted of a full printing of the lyrics of forgotten or lost old songs requested by readers or listeners who had dim memories of long-ago heard melodies, or who could no longer find their copy of the sheet music of the song. Sheet music was still popular then, soon to be replaced by increasingly available records and phonographs, and apparently the music columnist had access to thousands of sheet music booklets. He reported that he had hundred of requests for information monthly so frequently reminded readers that he could not begin to answer all of them. The lyrics of many of the printed songs were very touching and sentimental involving dying children or relatives or lovers, disappeared lovers, non-returning military sons and husbands, dear old mothers, and wonderful childhood memories. There were also some upbeat lyrics involving happy lovers and great religious faith and hope. Not so upbeat were songs titled: "Don't Sell Mother's Picture at the Sale," and the euphemistic "Baby's Gone to Sleep."

Copies of sheet music were called songs. Offers to trade songs by listeners were listed weekly. One woman eager to trade claimed to possess 2895 songs, not all sheet music but some painstakingly copied from listening to broadcasts. She was trumped by a Francis Queener of Marinette, WI who claimed to own 18,000 songs and was willing to trade.

The station produced and sold one book of 100 songs; another was the WLS Book of Hymns, advertised in Stand By! They were gratefully referred to by many letter writers.

Each week the program schedule for the following week was published. Surprisingly by today's standards a column of additional listening suggestions was also carried which listed highlights of programs on other networks and stations. Apparently the bond of being part of radio in the earlier days was greater than loyalty to a single station, even on the part of station management.

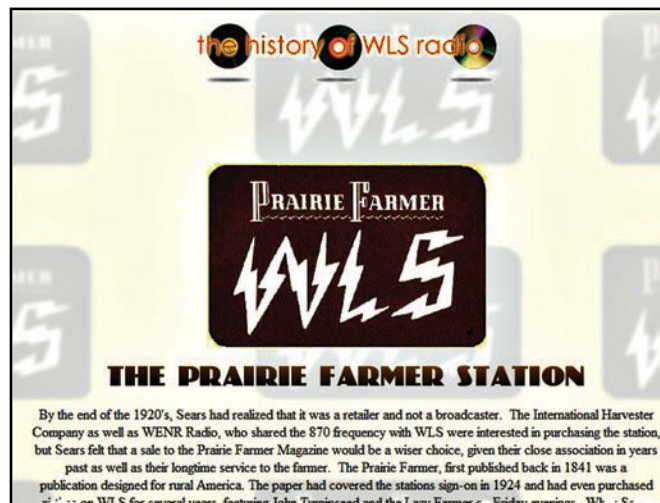


PHOTO D. The WLS Radio website gives details about the station's ownership transfer from Sears-Roebuck Co. to The Prairie Farmer magazine in 1928, <<http://bit.ly/NUw142>>. (Internet screen grab)

HISTORY ZONE

An Occasional Column Featuring Radio History Topics

By Ken Piletic, W9ZMR

CHARLIE, NELSON AND ORSON IN 1938

On October 30, 1938 at 8 PM Eastern Standard Time, a very popular radio program was broadcast on the NBC Radio Network. This program was *The Chase and Sanborn Hour*. It was a weekly variety program sponsored by the Chase and Sanborn Coffee Company featuring radio and movie stars of the day. The weekly host was Don Ameche, and the regular cast members were Dorothy Lamour, Edgar Bergen, Nelson Eddy, and Judy Canova, with Robert Armbruster's Orchestra. The program also featured guest performers, and this particular program's guest was Madeleine Carroll, the 1930's movie actress (not to be confused with Madelene Carroll, of *Mirror Mirror* - note the spelling differences of their first names).

In those days, most radio programs were known by their sponsor's name, in this case, *The Chase and Sanborn Hour*. This variety program featured lots of music and several short sketches as well as humorous remarks among the cast members. Most listeners referred to the program as *The Charlie McCarthy Program*. The reason is that Edgar Bergen, a member of the regular cast, was a ventriloquist. He had a number of dummies, one of which was Charlie McCarthy. Edgar and Charlie had back-and-forth routines with each other which the audience loved. Eventually, years later, Charlie got his own show which was actually called *The Charlie McCarthy Show*.

Tonight's program opened with Don Ameche announcing the sponsor's product and introducing the cast. Then Judy Canova and Don had a little banter, per the script. Charlie joined the conversation and began to sing. At this point Don said that Charlie should leave the singing to Nelson Eddy. Nelson came out and sang a rousing

Many poignant depression era items appeared in Stand By! Descriptions of street urchins trying to sell shoelaces or shoe shines even after dark and in the winter, and of adults wandering the streets looking for work, and stories of listeners in dire need of basics for their families are not uncommon in the magazine. A lasting word picture was that of the row of 30 or more unemployed adult men waiting at the elevated and subway exit stairs for the newspapers that employed riders gave them after they had read them on their way to work.

Personal items about station staff, musicians, announcers, and technicians were published each week. Staff marriages and births were announced, often accompanied by photos. In some cases, the subsequent birthdays of staff children would be noted, along with birthday party pictures involving cakes and siblings. Within a few years, more than 15 weddings in which both bride and groom were station personnel, so plenty of marriage and family news was available. Because so much programming was live, the staff was very large, including easily over 100 performers in addition to technical and administrative support personnel. Consequently, there was never a shortage of staff news items of various types.

Other personal news items included that of staff involved in traffic accidents and more pleasantly, fishing success stories and vacation trips.

News of staff illnesses and deaths was also commonplace. In those pre-antibiotic times, deaths due to pneumonia and flu-like diseases sometimes happened to young performers and others, and frequently after very short periods of illness. An illness would be reported, and within an issue or two, a resultant death might be noted. Then the listeners' responses would often be described, and consolation letters from listeners and readers would be printed.

One or more pages of listeners' letters were published each week. Letters covered appreciation of on-air staff, condolences for staff-related deaths, expressions of music preferences, questions about previous staff no longer with WLS, and questions about station personalities. The marital status of on-air staff was of great interest, and related questions were answered factually. Unusual now, the new airwave location of personnel leaving the station was reported.

Listeners wrote in their opinions on a variety of radio related subjects, such as whether listening to exciting radio programs was okay for children. A great number were comments about styles of music broadcast on WLS and other stations.

There were one or two humor columnists writing each week; a regular was Pat Buttram, later famous for being Gene Autry's sidekick on the CBS radio show, Melody Ranch. Pat was mocked for his Arkansas roots in other columns, and he gave as good as he got with his hillbilly dialect humor in a regular column.

Poems were also printed, humorous or serious and folksy in style. Edgar Guest, at one point a nationally syndicated newspaper poet and author of several poetry volumes, was a regular. His work was low-key, cheerful, homespun, common sense oriented; and it is easy to see how encouraging and popular his work was during the depression years. Actually Edgar was a Detroit, traveling by train each Tuesday to Chicago for his WLS weekly program, as almost all programming then was live.

Pictures were an important feature. In addition to the large cover picture of the "star of the week" were pictures of new babies, new personnel, orphanages blessed by

version of *The Song of the Vagabonds* (also known as *The Song of the Huguenots*), from the *Vagabond King* by Rudolf Friml. The audience recognized the song and enjoyed Eddy's performance.



On the NBC's "Chase and Sanborn Hour," (L to R): Judy Canova, Charlie McCarthy, Edgar Bergen, Annie (Canova's sister). On top: Zeke (Canova's brother).

Photo circa. 1938.

(Courtesy http://www.otrr.org/4img/details.php?image_id=6872)

An interesting side note is to recall that censorship was highly evident in 1938 radio broadcasts. Some words were changed in the lyrics of the song that Nelson Eddy had just sung, among which were the changes from "Lousy Rabble" to "Lazy Rabble", and "To Hell With Burgundy" to "Away With Burgundy".

Unfortunately for the listeners, the producers of the broadcast decided that Nelson Eddy should sing another song immediately after the first one. He sang an unfamiliar song about the Canadian loggers, known as *The Canadian Logging Song*. It was at this point that several of the radio listeners 'tuned-out' and adjusted their radios to see what else was on the air. Yet most NBC listeners continued listening to Charlie McCarthy, for a little longer anyway.

Some of those listeners who tuned-out at this time stumbled onto the CBS network's broadcast of Orson Welles' *Mercury Theatre on the Air*, which was presenting an adaptation of H.G. Wells' *War of the Worlds*. It just so happened that while Nelson Eddy was singing his *Canadian Loggers Song*, Orson Welles was beginning his "newscast" of the strange happenings on the planet Mars. Many radio

listeners who tuned-in at that time thought that they were listening to a real news broadcast because newscasts from Europe regarding Nazi invasions were frequent.



*Orson Welles and the cast of The Mercury Theater on the Air.
Courtesy <http://blog.seattlepi.com/movielady/2012/10/27/the-halloween-hoax-that-panicked-america-3/>*

Meantime, back at NBC, Charlie and Edgar began a little sketch about a haunted house. Since the next day would be Halloween, several radio programs were presenting Halloween-related stories. Dorothy Lamour then sang a new song written by Hoagy Carmichael, *Two Sleepy People*, a great rendition. Then Don Ameche read a commercial for Chase and Sanborn. This commercial was unusual in that it advertised the *Charlie McCarthy Radio Game*, available for Ten Cents and two fronts from Chase and Sanborn Dated Coffee Bags. It is a board game and he explained how to play it. These games became highly desirable collectors' items 75 years later.

Following the commercial, Madeleine and Don did a short play called *There's Always Juliet*, which ran for about ten minutes. It had a slow moving plot and the dialogue sounded like a soap opera. It was a good spot for more listeners to twist the dials of their radios to see what else is on. At this same time, about 26 minutes into the programs, Orson Welles was meeting the "vanguard of an invading army from the planet Mars" at Grover's Mill on CBS. Graphic descriptions of the Martian machines emerging from the cylinder would hold anybody's attention and those radio listeners who found *The War of the Worlds* program did not return to Charlie McCarthy that evening.

So what did the American farm family do during its evening leisure hours before the 1920's? It is a little hard for us to imagine a time when radio and television broadcasting was non-existent, and newspapers were hard to get on a timely basis for many rural readers. Rural evenings were then spent playing games, making music and listening to family members make music, reading, and chatting when guests visited. By today's standards, bed time was much earlier.

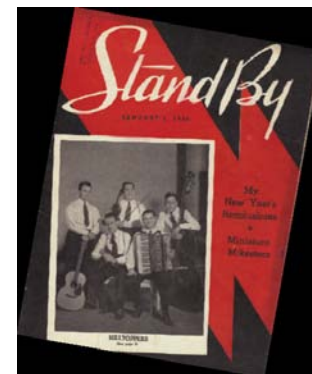
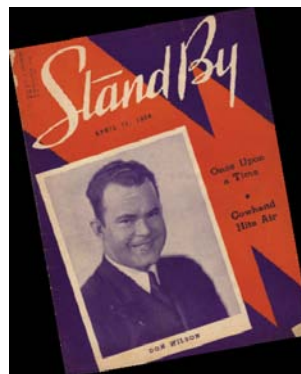
Try to imagine the growing excitement created by the fantastic new pastime of radio listening. What started as mostly younger and middle-aged males who experimented with non-user friendly crystal sets and earphones and erratic programming schedules (early radio geeks) became by 1930 a huge audience of all ages, no longer predominately male, that listened to the magic of information and entertainment every day and night from local and long-distance sources.

Stand By! entered the picture as Prairie Farmer solidified listener loyalty by making its listeners part of the growing WLS family of staff and audience. The magazine contributed to a fabulously successful combination of city-dwelling, regional, and somewhat isolated sometimes distant rural listeners, with extremely popular country music programming, information services of unlimited variety, and an emphasis on a human, folksy, and charismatic staff. WLS was not the only station to utilize a magazine to emphasize being part of the listener's family and probably not the only Chicago station to do so. But the essence and evidence of WLS' success is captured in these issues of Stand By!

The magazine began in 1935 with 16 pages and grew to twenty pages within a few months. It was printed on cheap paper, identical to that used by comic books back then. The only color used was on the cover, consisting of a solid color background framing a black and white photo of a station personality.

Magazine content covered an extensive landscape including recipes, sewing patterns, dress and hat sketches, and other homemaker hints pages with regular writers.

Also several folksy comment columns were included, some humorous, some personality oriented, and some describing various station operations matters.



PHOTOS A,B,C: The weekly arrival of WLS's Stand By magazine was highly anticipated by the Chicago station's legion of listeners, who were never disappointed. Shown here are, from left, the April 11, 1936; October 9, 1937; and January 1, 1938 editions. (Courtesy of Andrew Ooms)

COLLECTORS CORNER

An Occasional Column On Topics For Collectors

By Andrew Ooms

[EDITOR'S NOTE: The following article was contributed by Andrew Ooms at Radiofest 2013. It is a reprint of his article that appeared in the Nov. 2012 issue of Popular Communications. See www.popular-communications.com.]

STAND BY!

As someone interested in radio programming history and radio station history, especially that related to Chicago, I recently was an appreciative recipient of a great gift. At a yard sale in Payson, Arizona a friend of mine bought a box of magazines published by Chicago radio station WLS more than 70 years ago. The magazine was titled Stand By! It was published weekly, and mailed to subscribers for \$1.00 per year. Individual copies were five cents. My friend paid \$5.00 for the magazines and gave them to me. The copies I now have were originally mailed to an individual in Farmersburg, Indiana; I have more than 160 issues dating from February 1935 to February 1938.

Some context may help here, although likely redundant for some of you. WLS in the thirties, as now, broadcast at the maximum allowable power for United States AM stations, 50,000 watts. Back then, WLS was at 870 on the dial. After a North American broadcasters' agreement reached in the 1940's, WLS moved to its current position of 890 kilohertz. (Kilohertz replaced kilocycles as the conventional term of choice a few decades ago.)

WLS was operated by Sears shortly after its beginning in 1924 and the company was happy to encourage the understanding that WLS referred to World's Largest Store. (The Federal government licenses station call letters, but it is not involved in station slogans or determinations as to what the call letters stand for.) WBBX, WES, and WJR (assigned to Detroit almost immediately thereafter) were considered as call letters, but the final decision was WLS.



By 1930, a Huge Audience of All Ages, No Longer Predominately Male, Listened to Radio. (Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons)

By the 1930's, Sears had sold the station to the Prairie Farmer company. The Prairie Farmer, one of the company's products, was an immensely successful and respected farm magazine circulated throughout the Midwestern states. WLS' programming was thoroughly consistent with the company brand, happily accepting its urban audience (many of whom had moved to the city from the farm not too long before) but really emphasizing its rural outreach during an era when rural America did not have nearly the access to mainstream media and culture that it does now.

Following this sketch, Nelson Eddy sang an aria from Massenet's opera *Le roi de Lahore*, which Don Ameche had trouble pronouncing. Listeners who were hoping to hear comedy from McCarthy would find this a good place to look for another station. At this time on CBS, the Earthling army was returning fire at the Martians, and soldiers were being gassed by the Martians, a real grabber for new listeners.

It was now about 37 minutes into the programs. Judy Canova along with "Annie" and "Zeke" presented a comedy sketch about a football game. There was still a large listening audience. Immediately after the football sketch, Charlie and Madeleine did their own little routine which involved Charlie's receiving a letter from Paris, France written by another ventriloquist mannequin named Tutu. In the letter, Tutu called Charlie "Cabbage Head", which was supposed to be a complement. Charlie took it as an insult and referred to Tutu as "Gopher Puss". This was a delightful routine which continued to the final commercial, again advertising the *Charlie McCarthy Radio Game*.

Finally, Nelson Eddy sang his last song of the show, the drinking song from Robin Hood, *Brown October Ale*. At this same time, Orson Welles was winding up the *Mercury Theatre on the Air* broadcast of the *War of the Worlds*. It is unlikely that anyone tuned-out either show to hear something else.



War of the Worlds Newspaper Coverage 1938.

Both radio programs were over at 9 PM Eastern Standard time. The reports of people committing suicide over the *War of the Worlds* broadcast are highly exaggerated. While some people thought for a while that Orson's broadcast was serious, ordinary people eventually realized it was just a story - particularly those people who listened to the end of the broadcast and heard Orson's comment that "... you will be relieved, I hope, to learn that we didn't mean it ..."

There were many other radio stations broadcasting their own programs on October 30, 1938, but it is believed that most radio listeners were listening to Charlie McCarthy, and relatively few were listening to Orson Welles. For Orson's next broadcast, however, Orson had more listeners than ever before. As a result of the *War of the Worlds* broadcast, Orson Welles got a sponsor, Campbell Soup, and the name of the program was changed from *The Mercury Theatre on the Air* to the *Campbell Playhouse*. The *Chase and Sanborn Hour* continued for another eleven years. Edgar Bergen eventually got his own show in 1949, *The Charlie McCarthy Show* on CBS sponsored by Coca Cola.

RADIOFEST 2013 PHOTO REVIEW

