SPERDVAC gratefully extends its gratitude to these individuals who have contributed $50 or more to SPERDVAC during the past 12 months. If you wish to be a sponsor of SPERDVAC and join this select group, your tax-deductible donation to SPERDVAC can be mailed to Jerry Williams at P.O. Box 125 in Oroville, CA 95965. Thank you!
I recently ran across yet another poll reflecting the widespread mistrust Americans have for the media. This one was produced by Harvard University’s Institute of Politics. Among the 18-29 crowd, a mere 12 percent trust the media to “do the right thing.” The picture wasn’t always this negative, however. In the early days of radio, the media was perceived, and perceived itself, as generally part and parcel of the larger culture, sharing the same concerns and objectives as the rest of us. That hardly seems the case any longer. I doubt if many of us who fixate on old-time radio would waste our time if the shows and performers of that era were as disconnected and antagonistic towards our viewpoints as are so many of today’s media personalities and programs.

Recently, I began pulling out some old vinyl LPs from storage and reacquainting myself with the workings of a turntable. One of the first records I listened to was a spoken word recording produced in 1967 called A Message For Americans. The recording consists of eight radio commentaries by a Portland, OR broadcaster of that era, John Salisbury. Salisbury was a broadcaster from the old school. He has been gone from the scene for close to 30 years now but he was someone you don’t forget if you ever experienced his work.

John Salisbury was born in Minneapolis on April 17, 1916, and started working at a local radio station, WRLM, in 1933. He earned a Speech and Journalism degree from the University of Minnesota in 1941 and served with the Army Special Services Division during World War II. After release from the army, Salisbury returned to broadcasting in various capacities, first in Minnesota, later in Salt Lake City and eventually in Portland. He also taught radio at various times in Minneapolis and Washington D.C. Salisbury was also an accomplished playwright, essayist and actor with local theatrical groups in Minneapolis and Long Beach, CA—all talents that he seamlessly incorporated into his role as a broadcaster.

When Salisbury arrived in Portland in February 1955, it was not to take up another position in radio but rather to assume duties with a new television station, KLOX, which was set to go on the air the following month. John had been hired as KLOX’s chief announcer and production consultant. Salisbury remained with KLOX and its successor station, KPTV, for six years, eventually filling the role of news director. Salisbury also continued to write plays; he won the 1955 Portland Civic Theater playwriting contest for his three-act comedy-drama, This Blessed Union.

In September 1961, Salisbury went to work as news director for KXL radio. For the next 25 years Salisbury maintained his relationship with KXL in one capacity or another. His was a familiar voice to many listeners in Oregon and the Pacific Northwest. What we consider radio’s “Golden Age” may have virtually disappeared by the time he had settled in at his new assignment at KXL but the tradition never quite died with Salisbury. Not only did he handle straight news broadcasts but also lent his talents to a number of regular KXL features. Sunday Spectacular was a Sunday afternoon documentary series focusing on Hollywood subjects and personalities. A veritable encyclopedia of Hollywood knowledge dating back to the silent movie era, Salisbury seldom missed the opportunity to interview Hollywood figures including Bob Hope, Andy Williams, Maurice Chevalier, Fred Astaire, Henry Mancini and James Arness, often traveling out of state to research and record material.

Another program Salisbury hosted was a straight interview series, Talk Point, that included conversations with personalities such as Basil Rathbone, Danny Kaye, George Gobel and Julie Andrews. Perhaps, most notable of all, was Salisbury’s daily commentary series, A Message for Americans, in which Salisbury spoke to listeners of their common heritage, rights and responsibilities as Americans. No room for shouting, extremism or rancor in a Salisbury commentary, but just a gentle common sense approach to citizenship. The series received fulsome praise from listeners and was syndicated in some 21 markets in the Pacific Northwest.

In 1965, selections were published in a book called naturally enough A Message for Americans. In 1967, in response to numerous requests, the record album I mentioned ear-
Hello again!

There are a few ways to contact me with regard to items mentioned in this column: the SPERDVAC phone (877) 251-5771; e-mail Larry@sperdvac.com (I do check that e-mail often) or LarryGassman@Roadrunner.com.

**DVD DOCUMENTARY.** Honorary member Dave Parker, who was a part of the radio cast of *The Lone Ranger*, coproduced a fine documentary video which was shown at our March meeting. We have made arrangements to have copies of that DVD for sale. We will announce how you can obtain your very own copy soon.

**CONVENTION 2015.** SPERDVAC is planning another radio convention in November. Stay tuned! I can tell you that it will definitely be at the Holiday Inn Media Center in Burbank where it was in 2014. The dates will be November 6, 7, and 8. If you have ideas for workshops and or recreations please let me know. Also if you would like to volunteer your time to help us, please advise. We’ve already begun assembling the workshops and potential re-creations but please feel free to contribute your thoughts and ideas!

**MONTHLY MEETINGS.** Our next meeting is scheduled for July 11, 2015. It will be an example of a table read through and so far will feature Stuffy Singer, Ivan Cury and Terry Moore. We will be adding more to this panel and will keep you updated. We already have a schedule for the rest of the year. The location is currently in the San Fernando Valley. But members in Los Angeles and in Orange Counties are inquiring about meetings in their areas as well. We are open to all options. If you have a location in mind please let us know. If you can gather information about that location, so much the better. Typically, we have met in churches and in libraries on the second Saturday of each month. There has been no charge for the meeting place in the past, but this has begun to change in recent times. We’ve found a few possible locations for meetings in the Los Angeles San Fernando Valley area, but none so far in Orange County. If you have a church or clubhouse and would like us to hold a meeting there, please get in touch with us. Also, on a personal note: many of you know that Walden, John, and I are all totally blind. Walden Hughes lives in Costa Mesa, John and I live in Fullerton. Many of our friends have been very considerate in helping us get to meeting locations. But the trip to the valley often takes 90 minutes going, and a lot longer coming back in traffic. So if you would like to go to meetings and also wouldn’t mind picking us up, please let me know. We’re asking for help so that one or two people don’t have to always pick us up.

**LIBRARIES.** Thank yous continue to go out to Jerry Williams, Walden Hughes, and Phil and Sandi Hughes who have done so much to help with inventorying of SPERDVAC’s building. Many hours have been spent working to keep track of the organizations sizable holdings. You will begin to see greatly the results as more and more shows become available on line.

**ON-LINE ORDERS.** Thank you to those who have recently placed orders. Our libraries are beginning to grow and the fact that the orders continue to come in is very gratifying. Thank to both Jerry Haendiges and Roger Rittner for their efforts to make SPERDVAC’s on-line activity so fluid. We are now seeing the ordering process double and triple since the announcement of the on-line option.

**ON-LINE BUSINESS.** SPERDVAC now has opportunities for you to go on-line to take care of both radio and member related items. You can now begin the borrowing process of CDs on-line with a new CD on-line order form. Also we are happy to announce that we have a new membership application form that you can make use of. Many already have. We also have a member’s renewal form on-line as well. All three forms are downloadable. You can fill them out on-line or download them and fill them out and send them in. And you can, if you wish, use PayPal. And you don’t have to have an account with PayPal to use it. The account is free and this means that with continual use, you don’t have to continue to give them credit card information each time you use their services.

**PRINTED MATERIALS UPDATE.** Jerry Williams continues to work on the Printed Materials library. The library will open again a bit later in the year. Jerry is still working to get the library in to shape. We plan to also make it available to you in a digital CD format. More on that when the time for the grand opening gets closer.

**FACEBOOK.** As I’ve mentioned before, many radio shows and organizations have Facebook pages. John and I have such a page dedicated to our radio show, *Same Time, Same Station*, which is currently heard on the Internet. We invite you to “Like” the program by going to *Same Time, Same Station* on Facebook. SPERDVAC also has a Facebook Page. Just search for SPERDVAC. You can also find a page for *Yesterday USA* as well. In fact, if you have a favorite show that plays radio from the past, chances are good it is represented on Facebook.
Radio became the personal medium, with sets in the kitchen, the bedroom, the family car and—in portable form—everywhere. The local personality was typified by Martin Block (upper left), radio's first disc jockey. An example of the far-reaching network news and information services of NBC, CBS, ABC and MBS was Mutual’s Washington bureau (above). Group ownership came into prominence, and single independent operations were going strong. Mobile units made possible local coverage of almost any event. Stations had developed varied information, entertainment and service programs suited to their communities. And (above center) as any Bob and Ray fan can testify, radio still created its own stars.

**RADIO IN 1958**

**Serious Buyer Paying Top Dollar for**
Movie Posters (1910-1980) • Lobby Cards • Window Cards
Film Stills and Entertainment Photography
Original Screenplays and Scripts • Concert Posters 1920’s-1969
1920’s-1930’s Jazz and Blues 78 RPM Records

Will buy one piece or entire collections.
Buying all sizes; any condition accepted.
Immediate Cash Paid – Finders Fees offered
Always happy to provide appraisals!

**RALPH DELUCA**
157 Park Avenue • Madison, NJ 07940 USA
1-800-392-4050 Toll Free • 1-973-377-1007 Outside the US
1-973-377-4020 Fax • ralph@ralphdeluca.com
For more information check out my website at www.ralphdeluca.com
The trend on the part of national, local, and regional advertisers to sponsor transcribed—syndicated shows, continues to grow stronger.

Advertisers in increasing numbers are investing their money in open-end transcriptions because it is now a proven fact that shows such as Bold Venture can accomplish nothing short of miracles for the advertiser who has bought it for his city or region.

In short, “spot” radio is bigger than ever, and growing even bigger.

Why? Because the philosophy of advertisers has become more realistic than ever before. Every dollar spent in radio advertising must have a meaningful purpose. There must be no dissipation of funds.

And, having been equipped with a tool such as transcribed—syndicated programming, the advertiser and his agency can now literally make every dollar count. He can select city-by-city, region-by-region the ones in which he has to do the most concentrating. Then, to help him do the job, he can buy a top-drawer program, featuring the nation’s greatest entertainment personalities and top production values, and put it on the air in that city or in that region where it will do him the most good.

In other words, it is no longer necessary for him to buy a program which reaches areas of no interest to him whatsoever. Thus, with none of his money wasted in such areas, he is able to get full dollar-for-dollar value from his invested money.

Another tremendously important factor in the continued growth in importance of the transcribed—syndicated industry, has been that the leaders in the field have cut no corners to bring out the finest possible product.

The production budget per half-hour show for Bold Venture, a transcribed-syndicated show, is $12,000. In Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall, this show presents two of the finest and most popular actors in the world today.

This, then, is the trend—spare no dollars to produce the highest caliber show in order to insure that the buyers will be provided with the sure-fire audience puller.

It becomes increasingly clear, as the months go by, that television is not the entire reason for the prosperity of the “spot” radio industry.

It is true that many national sponsors who have put heavy money into television have also put money into television have also put money into “spot” radio to help them to do the job in those areas where television does not penetrate deeply enough. It is true, however, that the “spot” radio industry is standing on its own healthy feet.Advertisers in increasing numbers are buying open-end programs because the programs themselves are of such high quality that they are a match for, or superior to, other types of programming.

Open-end transcribed programming have many advantages, for local and national advertisers alike.

To the local sponsor, such programming affords the opportunity to present big names, such as Guy Lombardo and Humphrey Bogart, or an established character, such as “Boston Blackie” or “Cisco Kid,” as his very own in his community. The local sponsor’s own sales message is delivered by his own announcer in the open spots left in the program for that very purpose.

To the national sponsor, such programming insures that his prestige will be maintained in the cities and areas in which he is aware he must concentrate more than in others. He is buying a smooth, high-budgeted production, and he is buying a “name” with which to attract listeners. At the same time, he, too, is able to present his open-end show with that personal touch afforded by the local announcer and local promotions.

Both local and national advertisers are moreover buying a flexible tool. They can select the most advantageous time, day, and station and build a big listenership, and get maximum value per dollar spent.

It is precisely because the plus values of transcribed-syndicated programming that we, the producers, have found our programs increasingly easier to sell.

By FRDERIC W. ZIV, President, Frederic W. Ziv Company

Frederic W. Ziv

Old News is Good News. This essay on transcribed-syndicated programming originally appeared in the 1951 edition of The Radio Annual. Mr. Ziv was a pioneer in what is today called syndicated programming. He references to spot radio denote the commercial time within programming set aside for purchase by advertisers on a market-by-market basis.
Classic scripts by Philip Rapp—now formatted for your e-reader!

- **T**HE **P**HILIP **R**APP **C**OLLECTION: Albie’s Double Life, A television script ($0.99)
- **T**HE **P**HILIP **R**APP **C**OLLECTION: The Ed Wynn Show, A television script from December 8, 1961 ($0.99)
- **T**HE **P**HILIP **R**APP **C**OLLECTION: Maxwell House Coffee Time, A radio script from January 15, 1942 ($0.99)
- **T**HE **P**HILIP **R**APP **C**OLLECTION: Maxwell House Coffee Time, A radio script from January 18, 1940 ($0.99)
- **T**HE **P**HILIP **R**APP **C**OLLECTION: The Third Girl from the Right, A TV Pilot ($0.99)
- **M**atch **P**lease, **D**arling, A Bickersons’ Play by Philip Rapp and Joel Rapp ($2.99)
WOMEN STRUGGLED TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY IN THE EARLIEST DAYS OF RADIO FOR ANY NUMBER OF REASONS BUT FOREMOST HAD TO BE THE SOCIAL PREJUDICE THAT THERE WAS JUST SOMETHING UN-LADYLIKE ABOUT WOMEN BEING FUNNY. BUT WOMEN PERSEVERED AND GERTRUDE BERG WAS ONE OF THE FIRST TO OFFER A COMPLETE COMEDY SHOW TO A PRODUCER IN WHICH THE COMEDIENNE WOULD WRITE EACH EPISODE, PLAY THE LEAD ROLE AND ACT AS DIRECTOR.

Producer Himan Brown found Berg’s scripts enticing enough to sell the idea to NBC. Berg called her new series The Rise of the Goldbergs, in which she would tell the stories of her own family background. As she told her biographer, she was translating her life with her grandmother, her mother and father and family friends she had heard into The Goldbergs and “began to live with them on the air.” Berg, born Tillie Edelstein in 1899, was a New York native who spent her early years in a three-story walkup apartment and frequently visited friends on the east side. Immigrant Jewish families embraced both education and independence, which tended to generate conflicts between first generation parents and their American born offspring. NBC executives noted that Berg had an agenda of sorts: she strongly objected to the broken dialects and smutty wisecracks of Jewish vaudeville comics. But she did not hesitate to use malapropisms in her own radio scripts. However, Berg tempered her ethnic humor with warmth and wisdom.

Most of the cast remained with the show from the 15-min-
MIRTH AND MADNESS AS RADIO CELEBRATED THE WILD AND WOOLLY SHENANIGANS OF THE SO-CALLED FAIRER SEX!
ute episodes on NBC Blue in 1929 to the TV show on CBS from 1949-50. Molly Goldberg’s husband, Jake, was played for the most part by James R. Waters, while their children Rosalie and Sammy were played by Roslyn Silber and Alfred Ryder. New characters were Uncle David played by Yiddish theater comic Menasha Skulnik and the grown-up Sammy was played by Everett Sloane.

Was The Goldbergs a soap opera? It certainly was, writes Madeleine Edmondson and David Rounds in their book, *The Soaps*, but it was the best-known and most durable of “the ethnic soaps.” One NBC executive said that Ms. Berg was a preacher of the “bright side” of life despite some of the sordid things that went on. He said she believed that financial success cannot be justified except when employed in the progress of one’s fellow man.

Gertrude Berg died of heart failure on September 14, 1966, at 66.

Rudy Vallee played an important role in introducing comedians to American radio listeners on his Fleischmann Hour variety show in the early 1930s and The Rudy Vallee Show in the 1940s. He was especially on the look-out for talented comedienne, and he found one in Joan Davis, a somewhat seasoned comic having appeared in several films in the 1930s including *Hold that Co-ed* with John Barrymore and future radio co-star Jack Haley.

Born Madonna Josephine Davis in 1907, she first appeared on The Rudy Vallee Show on August 28, 1941, and four months later she was hired as a regular on the show. When Rudy Vallee joined the Coast Guard Davis took over as host of the program, and then in 1943 she had her own program, a sitcom called The Sealtest Village Store that co-starred Jack Haley. This program ran on CBS from July 1943 to June 1945. Davis was now operator and co-owner of the village store, and later she got her own store on Joanie’s Tea Room in September 1945, which ran until June 1947. In the supporting cast were Verna Felton, Shirley Mitchell, Wally Brown and announcers Harry Von Zell and Bob Lemond. The writers were led by Abe Burrows, and the director was Dave Titus. Davis continued operating the tea room on Joan Davis Time in 1947 and 1948 with Lionel Stander as her gravel-voiced manager. Others appearing in the program were Hans Conried, Mary Jane Croft, the Choraliers and John Rarig’s orchestra. In the summer of 1949 CBS replaced The Lux Radio Theater with Leave It to Joan, which continued until 1950 with Davis and remaining cast members Shirley Mitchell and Willard Waterman. The producer-director of these shows was Dick Mack.

On radio her character was a man-crazy female who laid various traps to catch the nearest male on the program. Her main ap-
peal to listeners was her whiny voice and her girl-next-door availability. When she moved to NBC television in 1952 she was cast as the manic wife of a mild-mannered judge played by Jim Backus. She won an Emmy for I Married Joan in 1953.

Joan Davis made several movies prior to and during her radio series, the most notable of which were Hold That Ghost with Abbott and Costello and If You Knew Susie with Eddie Cantor, the latter being a close friend.

Davis died at age 51 of a heart attack in 1961.

Eunice Quidens of Mill Valley, CA probably never knew in her childhood days that she would someday work with Fannie Brice in the revival of The Ziegfeld Follies of 1934-36. Quidens toured with a theatrical company when still very young, where she met Lee Shubert who changed her name to Eve Arden. This name-change occurred when Arden was cast with two other “stars to be,” Lucille Ball and Ann Miller, in the 1937 film Stage Door.

Arden first appeared on radio in The Danny Kaye Show and The Sealtest Village Store. Quite by accident she met CBS chairman William Paley at a New York nightclub on her way home from a promotional tour for Hollywood films. Out of the blue Paley offered her the lead in a proposed new radio comedy series about a high-school English teacher to be called Our Miss Brooks. Paley and others at CBS were impressed with her ability to handle witty scripts as a regular on The Danny Kaye Show. Arden almost turned down this opportunity as she planned to spend the summer relaxing with her children, and she also did not like the early scripts. But a new technology from Germany called audio tape saved the day for Paley. He ordered new scripts and planned to record the first 15 programs using the opening show as a summer replacement for Lux Radio Theatre. Arden accepted the lead role of Connie Brooks, and after taping the first episodes she was able to spend the summer with her family. The recorded Our Miss Brooks shows were taped without retakes, and most members of the cast said this increased the quality of their performances. When it was broadcast, the first program drew the largest CBS radio audience in several years. Our Miss Brooks had a long run from 1948 to 1957.

Eve Arden became very popular with real teachers all over the country. Her comic talent and expert timing inspired working educators everywhere. She was the first bright unmarried independent working female character on radio and later on television as well. Quick, outspoken and often sophisticated, Connie Brooks had the fastest tongue in the west, using wise cracks and flippantry aside that cut almost anyone down to size. Her wet noodle of a beau, fellow teacher Philip Boynton (Jeff Chandler), could be easily handled, but her principal, Osgood Conklin, as played by Gale Gordon, was another matter. He could be quite overbearing so Connie had to use subterfuge to fool him, which didn’t always work. Other cast members were Richard Crenna as Walter Denton, Connie’s star student, and Gloria McMillan as Walter’s girlfriend Harriet, who was Conklin’s daughter. Jane Morgan played Mrs. Davis, Connie’s landlady.

Eve Arden as Connie Brooks raised the image of teachers in an era slowly recovering from the Great Depression, even if their salaries remained the same. As Connie Brooks, Eve Arden could be tough but she also could propose solutions to problems that actually worked. Eve Arden had further success with her character in the TV series from 1952-56. The entire radio cast moved to the television studio except Mr. Boynton. Jeff Chandler was a working film star and Robert Rockwell took the role.

The TV cast also appeared in a 1956 feature produced by Warner Brothers. Interestingly, in the feature version Connie finally got her man—she and Boynton tied the knot.

Eve Arden died of cancer and heart disease at age 82 in 1990.

Several comedienne appeared in Golden Age situation comedies, which, like their television offspring, are not always seen as worth watching by discriminating viewers. Lucille Ball, who impressed millions with her comic talent in I Love Lucy, does not always do as well in her radio offerings. Ball was best known in radio for her role as “zany housewife” Liz Cooper who is married to George Cooper, played by Richard Denning. Her boss Rudolph Atterbury was played by Gale Gordon. The supporting cast was Bea Benaderet and Ruth Perrot. Jess Oppenheimer was producer/director and the writers were Bob Carroll and Madelyn Pugh. They based My Favorite Husband on Mr. and Mrs. Cugat, a novel by Isabel Rorick. The book featured an addled housewife who engaged her husband in social-climbing schemes. Ball and her husband, Desi Arnaz, formed the production company, Desilu, which produced the television version of Our Miss Brooks and later I Love Lucy.

Lucille Ball was a close friend of several comedienne. One was Ann Sothern, a well-established film star who was also successful on radio. Sothern played Maisie Revere on CBS from 1945 to 1947. Marie Wilson played the “unaware” roommate of Jane Stacy (Cathy Lewis) in My Friend Irma on CBS radio from 1947 to 1954. Gale Storm, a drama
However, after a retrospective of her films in the 1990s she was “discovered” by the academic world as a strong woman who portrayed Maisie as “a persistently liberated presence.”

student from Texas, won a Gateway to Hollywood contest in 1939 which eventually led to My Little Margie on CBS radio and television from 1952 to 1955. Margie as played by Gale Storm was a schemer who wanted to teach the men in her life “a lesson.” Like most females in the broadcast industry comedienne were depicted as light weights with weak-kneed males to contend with.

Ann Sothern starred on Broadway and worked in B-films at RKO before she was cast by MGM as Maisie Revere, a brash but lovable Brooklyn showgirl, a part originally planned for Jean Harlow. Sothern was so popular as Maisie that she was hired to do the whole film series: Maisie, Congo Maisie, Gold Rush Maisie, Maisie was a Lady, Ringside Maisie, Maisie Gets Her Man, Swing Shift Maisie, Maisie Goes to Reno, Up Goes Maisie and Undercover Maisie. In the first film, Maisie, she played burlesque dancer Mary O’Connor. In Congo Maisie Sothern took on the Harlow role opposite John Carroll. Maisie pictures made so much money that independent producers were invited to try edgy movies that otherwise would not have been filmed. As a result of her performance in Swing Shift Maisie, Time Magazine named Sothern as the “smartest comedienne in the business.” After performing the role in a Lux Radio Theatre adaptation of the original Maisie film to great success, CBS starred Sothern in the radio series 1945-1947, and then MGM starred Sothern in a syndicated radio version titled The Adventures of Maisie which would run from 1949 to 1954, and on Mutual in 1952. MGM offered Sothern the lead in the film Du Barry Was a Lady, but she rejected the offer, and suggested it be given to her friend Lucille Ball. Sothern went on to television where she played Don Porter’s brash secretary in Private Secretary (CBS, 1953-1957) and The Ann Sothern Show (1958-1961).

Media critics were tough on Ann Sothern, dismissing her early Maisie films as routine comedy. The entertainment press carried over this attitude for her radio and TV work as well. However, after a retrospective of her films in the 1990s she was “discovered” by the academic world as a strong woman who portrayed Maisie as “a persistently liberated presence.” Sothern won two Golden Globes and was nominated for five Emmy awards in her television career. Sothern died of heart failure at age 92 in 2001.

Another blond who fought the “light weight” image was Marie Wilson, who first caught attention for her natural whimsy in Ken Murray’s Blackouts, a road-show vaudeville revival in the late 1940s. Cy Howard created My Friend Irma for Wilson on CBS radio, which ran from 1947 to 1954. Irma’s roommate, Jane Stacy (Cathy Lewis), opened each episode with Irma’s latest escapade. Wilson played Irma as a clueless “innocent unaware.” They rented an apartment owned by Mrs. O’Reilly, their Irish landlady, played by Jane Morgan. Irma’s deadbeat boyfriend, Al, was played by John Brown. He never had a real job but depended on endless get-rich-quick schemes, which somehow never worked
out. An important character in the lives of Jane and Irma was Professor Kropotkin (Hans Conried) who lived upstairs and played the violin in the orchestra at the Princess burlesque theatre. Every morning he greeted Jane as the Easter Bunny and Irma as "Bugs Bunny," a well-known cartoon character. To avoid raises in his rent, Kropotkin pretended to be interested in Ms. O'Reilly. Irma's day job was secretary to Mr. Clyde (Alan Reed). She organized his files in such an unusual manner that he couldn't find anything. Mr. Clyde fired Irma as a result, but he had to hire her back to get any work done. During this episode Irma noticed that her boss's hair had turned from black to white in only six months.

**My Friend Irma** was the first top-rated situation comedy of the 1940s to escalate not only to television but also to film and the comics section of local newspapers. It was the first telecast to emanate from Television City in Hollywood. The film series *My Friend Irma* introduced Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis to viewers in a sequel titled *My Friend Irma Goes West* in 1950.

Wilson succumbed to cancer at the relatively youthful age of 56 in 1972.

Like Gertude Berg, Fannie Brice was raised on the lower east side of Manhattan where she learned to collect dimes and nickels on the streets of Harlem by singing sad songs while shedding “real tears.” She won an amateur-night talent contest and got noticed by Broadway producers. By 1917 she was a major star in *The Ziegfeld Follies and known throughout the country for her haunting interpretation of the love song “My Man.” She introduced the Baby Snooks character on stage in 1932. Snooks appealed to eastside New Yorkers “as the kid they used to be,” according to Brice’s biographer, Norman Katkov. She had imagination, she was eager, alive and basically a good kid, “not vicious or mean” even toward Daddy, who was the unwitting victim of most of her schemes.

She became a popular radio celebrity after Snooks was introduced on *The Ziegfeld Follies of the Air* (CBS, 1936). Daddy was played by Alan Reed at first but most remember him as Lancelot Higgins played by Hanley Stafford. Brice and Snooks were moved to *The Good News of 1938* which promoted Hollywood movies. In 1940 it became *Maxwell House Coffee Time*, an hour-long show that featured both Baby Snooks and comedian Frank Morgan, fresh from *The Wizard of Oz*. Arlene Harris played mommy, Danny Thomas played Jerry Dingle, and Charlie Cantor played Uncle Louie. The final show featuring Brice as Snooks was the CBS/NBC half-hour which was called *The Baby Snooks Show* (September 1940 - May 1948).

Brice died suddenly of a cerebral hemorrhage in 1951 at the age of 59.
I want to let everyone know about this year’s Lum and Abner Festival, set for June 5-6 in Mena, AR. Sam Brown, Tim Hollis, and I have invited a couple of special guests, and we’ll be staging a National Lum and Abner Society program, much as we did from 1985 to 2005!

Here’s what’s going on:
On Friday, June 5, I’ve been invited to perform a “Lum and Abner Cartoon Sketching Show” in Janssen Park at 4:00 p.m. I’ll talk about Lum and Abner, my comic strip work, etc. and draw the characters.

On Saturday, June 6, we’ll be joined by John Rose (cartoonist, Barney Google and Snuffy Smith) and Mike Curtis (writer, Dick Tracy) at the Ouachita Little Theater. We’ll have a “meet and greet” at 12:30, and a program starting at 1:00 p.m. John will draw cartoons, Mike and I will talk about the crossover of the Dick Tracy and Lum and Abner comic strips of last summer, and we’ll all perform a brand new old-time radio Lum and Abner script in which the old fellows meet Snuffy Smith (John Rose) and Dick Tracy (Mike Curtis).

And there is so much more happening with the Lum and Abner Festival. Please visit our website, lumandabnersociety.org, and I’ll have links to lots more info.

I hope you can join us this year!
An Important Message

from Jerry Haendiges

For the last year and a half, we’ve been working hard to bring the sperdvac library into the 21st Century. I’m pleased to announce that we now have a fully operational and complete On-line CD Catalog up and working.

The former “Archives” and “Hollywood Museum” catalogs have been integrated. We are now offering our programs in only CD format as all other formats have shown very little interest in the past several years.

The catalog is sorted in both CD number and Alpha-Date lists that may be viewed on-line or downloaded in fully compatible PDF format. There are two versions of each. One will give you a lot of information for each show and the second is a simple one-line version for those who are just interested in basic information for the shows and want faster downloading (although we’ve formatted both for relatively fast downloading). The lists are fully searchable.

A major advantage of this system is that you will now be able to order all of your rentals from one place. No more trying to figure out which librarian has what CDs. All CDs will be ordered on one on-line order form. Ordering on-line will speed up shipping time, but you’ll still be able to order by mail, if you prefer, by downloading a print-and-mail order form.

I invite you to check out the catalog and order form by going to www.sperdvac.com and go to “Lending Library.” If you want to go directly to the Catalog page, simply click on www.sperdvac.com/library.html.

With this new flexibility, we can get Library updates out faster. So we will no longer need to rely on the Radiogram to send out the latest Library additions. Those will always be available at the top of the website Library page. And the downloadable catalog(s) will always have the latest additions included. We will also be offering a regular automated email alert when new versions of the list are added to the Site.

There are several people instrumental in bringing this project to fruition. First and foremost I want to thank my good friend Roger Rittner. Without equivocation, Roger offered to help me develop the much needed Database, which was cornerstone to this project. Without Roger’s help in fully constructing the Database, this project would have been delayed for months, if not years. Also, when I mentioned to Roger that I needed to find a “head librarian” to handle the order distribution, I hardly had the words out before he said “I’ll do it!” So thanks, Roger, you’re a wonderful friend!

Now then, all of these shows just didn’t magically jump from the printed catalog pages into the Database. I thought long and hard about how to best handle this step. We tried scanning the pages and some members had actually already scanned many of the pages. But the amount of time needed to repair the scanning errors made that method just plain unworkable. So I decided the only plausible option was to completely re-type all of the pages in digital format. Several volunteers were used in this massive project, but I want to give a very special thanks to two in particular. Sandi Hughes and Barbara Williams quickly volunteered and without complaining, rapidly typed up anything I asked them to do. It’s great to have friends like these who just want to be helpful. Thanks! I really appreciate it.

And finally, I want to thank the entire sperdvac board. All of the board members have been most helpful and cooperative. You, as members, are very fortunate to have such leaders as these on your side.

I think all of the instructions on the Website are quite clear and easy to understand, but if you have any questions whatsoever, please feel free to ask me at Jerry@sperdvac.com.

Happy Borrowing!