

February Newsletter



February 2003

Issue 6

**February Meeting
Williamson's
February 15, 2003**

**Reception 12:00 noon
Lunch 12:30 pm
Ratecard \$18 Members / \$20 Non-members
Phone 610-436-4217**

Man, it's cold out there. Where's global warming when you need it? The Pioneers February program will heat you up, and warm your heart. We'll have three speakers (count 'em): **Ray Murray, Susan Cohen-Dickler** and **Jan Dickler**, who are the founders of Banyan Productions.

They produce 500 original episodes of TV a year for Discovery, Discover-Health, The Food Network, Home and Garden TV, the Travel Channel, The Learning Channel, and Lifetime. It amounts to ten years of lifestyle oriented reality based TV programming.

It will be wonderful but we

need you there. At Williamson's, once again. (Great food.) 12 noon reception, 12:30 lunch on February 19. **Please call 610-436-4217 or e-mail morris-sam6@aol.com**. WE MUST HAVE RESERVATIONS TO PROPERLY PREPARE FOR YOU. DON'T BE DISAPPOINTED...CALL OR E-MAIL NOW.

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Please send items for the newsletter to Paul Norton, 205 Ocean View Blvd., Lewes, DE 19958, or e-mail nanort@aol.com. Call or fax Paul at 302-645-8910. Before faxing call so the fax can be set up. We need your input for our output.

Now hatred is the greatest pleasure, Men love in haste, but they detest in leisure.

Lord Byron, Don Juan

Happenings

We had a great meeting in January with the always interesting **Marc Howard**. He gave a candid report on his change of anchoring jobs from Channel 6 to Channel 3. A goodly crowd was there. If you would like to check the meeting, or all of our meetings, you can do it online at www.broadcastpioneers.com. It's a great spot to check Philadelphia broadcasting history, and get up-to-date on current broadcasting news.

Carter and **Pat Merbreier** (Captain and Mrs. Noah)

spent their 30th Christmas in England visiting with their family and five-month old great grandson, Oliver. Granddaughter Abigail has just been appointed the Chief Operating Officer of Novapal, a company which developed the technology for converting existing analogue television signals in the UK into digital using TV set-top-boxes.

Dr. Neil Harvey, who is the Chairperson of our Scholarship Committee, has sent letters to 60 colleges and universities launching the Broadcast

Pioneers of Philadelphia Annual Scholarship competition. This year 6 one thousand dollar scholarships will be presented at our meeting on April 16.

Gerry Wilkinson is delighted to be joining Pioneers **Jerry Blavat** and **Johnny Lerro** on the staff of WVLT Radio, Cruisin' 92.1, as a consultant. You can check Gerry's work on their new website www.wvlt.com. He will be working on programming and format with their new PD, Bill Marshall. Billy has run some

of the sound equipment at our meetings when **Pat Delsi's** son, Dave, couldn't do it. **Dave Delsi** (Dave Michaels on the air) is on WVLT from 2 to 5 pm.

Herb Clarke was the M.C. on December 17 of the WCAU Prime Time Club at their meeting at Cedarbrook Country Club. On February 23 the group will celebrate their 19th annual Florida reunion in Ft. Lauderdale.

More Happenings

We are sad to learn of the death of **Paul Parker** at age 76 at Atlantic City Medical Center of complications following a stroke. Paul was a Pioneers member who in the early sixties was the 'question mike' on WFIL. He was later an award winning reporter on WINS in New York. Our thanks to his wife Sherry for informing us. His friends in the Pioneers will miss him.

Charlie Higgins has notified us of the death of former WCAU-TV Special Projects Engineer **Bob Ervin** at age 65. Bob had cancer. He had retired early from WCAU after having open heart surgery. We've also learned from Captain Noah

And More

For a truly Jobe-like story though you must talk to member **Ed Sciaky** (pr. Shocky). Ed, a diabetic, got a staph infection in his foot. After many surgeries and medications to correct it, doctors said it had to be amputated. It was...below the ankle. Then, Ed awakened one morning and was paralyzed. The paralysis went away but it was discovered that he had a staph infection in the spine. This is accompanied by tremendous weakness in the arms and shoulders. Now at Bryn Mawr Rehab trying to strengthen his arms and shoulders Ed says, "I feel like I died and everybody I ever knew is contacting me, sending flowers, calling, sending cards." Billy Joel, Bruce Springsteen,

And.....

Welcome new members: **Michael Spack** who is now an account executive with the "Inquirer/Daily News." Beginning in 1957, Michael was with many broadcast outlets in Philadelphia and elsewhere. **Dave Klahr** who many years ago was a producer on radio for Al Meltzer then became Program Director of WFIL-FM, then WMGK-FM, later owner/GM of WVLT, Vineland and others and is now Regional Vice President of Operations for Metro Networks. **Michael Tearson**, 'A living Legend', who worked for many Philadelphia stations including WYSP, WMMR, and WIOQ and is currently President of WMGK. **Lee McCarthy** who is currently

that **Al Carpenter**, long time WPVI-TV employee and father of 7 daughters, died on New Year's Day 2003.

Hal Woodward who was with, among others, WFIL and KYW, had a heart attack in November, open heart surgery, and is now recovering at home. At WFIL Hal was a writer and disc jockey. At the WFIL "Radio Show Wagon," Hal would speak of his being "in the aluminum blister at Godfrey and Wister." On KYW he did a show called "The Old Curiosity Shop" among others. His wife Catherine will be remembered as having been in record promotion with RCA.

Bonnie Raitt are just a few who have called. WMGK Program Director Rick Strauss continues his Springsteen program on the weekends. Ed Hopes to be back soon. All the Pioneers hope so too, Ed.

All of the Pioneers send their thanks to **Dave Custis** for the CD which he so graciously gave to all members present at the December meeting. It contained a wonderful collection of holiday music from Dave's collection that John Butterworth's audio-video communication transferred to CD for him. The many wonderful cuts on the album include "Twas the night before Christmas" from the Chase and Sanborn

a Professor at Villanova University and began in broadcasting in 1959. Lee will be remembered for his work at NBC, and WTXF in Philadelphia and others. **David Madden**, a reporter-anchor at KYW Newsradio has been in broadcasting since 1977 and has worked for WWDB, WFIL, and others in Philadelphia. **Charles T. Gindhart, Jr.** was a news-cameraman at WCAU-TV in 1951. Now retired Gindhart worked for the government and as a cinematographer. Congratulations to all of our new members, and we hope to see you in the near future at meetings.

Les Keiter, now 83 and living in Hawaii, returned recently to Philadelphia to be inducted into the Big Five Basketball Hall of Fame at the University of Pennsylvania's Palestra. Keiter's broadcasts were memorable with his 'buzzer bombs', a 'a tall 6 foot five boy with a blonde brush cut towering into the ozone', and many, many other colorful phrases. Many will remember his staying at the mike during a bomb scare at the Palestra. Absolutely one of a kind. He and his wife Leila travel around to see their 5 children and 8 grandchildren. Keiter was inducted into the Hawaii Sports Hall of Fame in 1999.

Show starring Edgar Bergen, Charlie McCarthy and features Bergen's then six year old daughter, Candice. It has Nat King Cole singing "The Christmas Song," which Mel Torme famously called his annuity. There are a lot of others. Thanks Dave.

Sally Starr has turned 80, and she feels like she's 45, she says. "I think it is going to be the best year of my life." That's our Gal Sal.

Betty Ludlow, a WFIL-TV Executive Secretary, is recovering from lung surgery in Florida.

Eternity is two people and a turkey.

James Dent

We've had a note from **Joseph Frazer** Yardley, now 81, who began in broadcasting at Channel 12 when it was WPFH, a commercial station. He then moved to WRCV Radio with Pioneers' Person of the Year, the late **Harold Panepacker**. He went on to NBC spot sales and General Sales Manager of WNBC-TV in New York. He left broadcasting after a brief stint as General Manager of WTMR in Camden. Joe spent the New Year in the hospital recuperating from emphysema/pneumonia.