

# *Closed Circuit* THE WGN FAMILY LETTER

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May 19, 1978

ITALIAN CIVIC ORGANIZATION  
TO HONOR DANIEL T. PECARO, PRESIDENT OF  
WGN CONTINENTAL BROADCASTING COMPANY

The DANTE AWARD, a coveted and distinguished award for human relations in communications, will be presented to DANIEL T. PECARO, President and Chief Executive Officer of WGN Continental Broadcasting Company, by the Joint Civic Committee of Italian Americans on May 19 at the Como Inn.

Jerome Zurla, Chairman of the Human Relations Committee, has again enlisted WALLY PHILLIPS as Master of Ceremonies for this event, which will be attended by well known representatives of the press, television and radio.

PECARO, an outstanding citizen who has made an enormous contribution to the broadcasting industry and whose record is in the traditions of the immortal Dante, who said..."If I should prove a timid friend to truth, I fear to lose my fame among the folk whose age will call this present epoch 'ancient'".

President of the Joint Civic Committee of Italian Americans is Dr. James F. Greco.

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JOHN JAKES' POWERFUL NOVEL

"THE BASTARD"

PREMIERES ON WGN TELEVISION 9

MAY 22 & 23

Andrew Stevens Heads All-Star Cast of \$3,000,000 Production

"The Bastard," the phenomenal bestseller written by John Jakes as the first in his seven-book historical drama on the "Kent Family Chronicles" that is the story of the birth of America, has been made into a four-hour, two night television movie that will premiere on WGN Television 9, Monday, May 22 and Tuesday, May 23 from 8:00 - 10:00 p.m. each night.

Andrew Stevens, Hollywood's newest star with two current hit films, "The Fury" and "The Boys in Company C," heads an all-star cast in the \$3,000,000 production that includes (alphabetically):

Noah Beery, Peter Bonerz, Tom Bosley, Kim Cattrall, John Colicos, William Daniels, Buddy Ebsen, Lorne Greene, James Gregory, Olivia Hussey, Herbert Jefferson, Jr., Cameron Mitchell, Harry Morgan, Patricia Neal, Eleanor Parker, Donald Pleasence, William Shatner, Barry Sullivan and Keenan Wynn. Raymond Burr will narrate.

"The Bastard" is the story of Phillipe Charboneau (Andrew Stevens), a young illegitimate Frenchman, and his mother Marie (Patricia Neal), who set out to establish his birthright as the son of an English nobleman. Their efforts to share in the title and estate are violently opposed by the nobleman's family, with the result that mother and son are forced to flee to Colonial America for safety.

With a new Americanized identity of Philip Kent, the central character's struggle for paternal recognition ignites this highly dramatic adventure story that eventually involves Philip in the American Revolutionary War.

The historical benefits of "The Bastard" have been recognized by an endorsement from the Los Angeles City American Revolution Bicentennial Committee.

Author John Jakes launched his seven books in "The American Bicentennial Series" that are "The Kent Family Chronicles" several years ago. "The Bastard" - the first book - sold more than 3,000,000 copies, with the seventh, "The Lawless," only released last month and already the top-selling paperback in the nation. All told, Jakes' novels on the making of America have sold more than 26,000,000 copies.

Executive producer for "The Bastard" is John Wilder, who also adapted Jakes' novel for television. Producer is Joe Byrne, with Lee H. Katzin directing from a teleplay by Guerdon Trueblood. Academy Award winning ("Tom Jones") composer John Addison has composed the musical score.

In addition to "The Bastard," two additional top budget novel dramatizations are being prepared by Operation Prime Time this year; Irwin Shaw's "Evening in Byzantium" - now in production - will air in July with Howard Fast's "The Immigrants" scheduled for November.

PPY BIRTHDAY to: RON CONTE-May 26, NORA SOKOLOWSKE-May 29, JOHN CHOYNACKI-May 31, VINCENT SKAFF-June 1, LUCILLE ANTONIK-June 1, VICTOR MAGALLON-June 1, CHARLES MEYER-June 2, MAE NEACE-June 2, JONAS JONES-June 2, BOB PRESTEGAARD-June 3, DAVID BERRY-June 3, BOB FOSTER-June 4 and LIZ COGGS-June 4.

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GET WELL WISHES to ARLENE KRAJECKE (Switchboard) who is at home recuperating from an automobile accident and to DICK BARTOS at home.

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### NEW ARRIVALS

Congratulations to Mr. & Mrs. JIM DISCH (Newsroom) on the birth of STEVEN MATTHEW, 8 lbs. 9 ounces, on May 11. Baby Steven will surely enjoy the attention of the Disch triplets.

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RAY RAYNER SAYS: "The mouth is the grocer's friend, the dentist's fortune, the speaker's pride, and the fool's trap."

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### FIVE TIPS

According to Max Gunther, author of "THE LUCK FACTOR," there are five major characteristics that distinguish the lucky from the unlucky. You might be surprised to learn that these "lucky" principles include:

Be friendly,

Be bold,

Be prepared,

Be willing to turn back when you find you have taken a wrong turn,

Act on your hunches --- but be sure you have all the facts first.

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### RECIPE CORNER

#### CHICKEN ALFREDO

3 to 4 large chicken breasts, (boned and split in 1/2)  
4 tbsp. salad oil  
2 tbsp. lemon juice  
1 clove garlic (split)  
2 tbsp. Parmesan cheese, grated  
1/2 tsp. oregano  
1 tsp. salt  
1/2 tsp. pepper.

#### DIP MIX

1/2 c. flour  
1/2 tsp. salt  
2 Tbsp. Parmesan cheese  
2 tsp. paprika  
1/4 tsp. pepper

In a small bowl, combine oil, lemon juice, garlic, cheese, oregano, salt & pepper. Beat with beater for 1 minute. Put chicken breasts in a shallow bowl and pour marinade over. Cover and refrigerate 2 hours turning several times. Combine ingredients of dip mix. Dip each piece of chicken in flour mixture. Melt 1/4 cup butter or margarine and 2 tbsp. oil in a heavy skillet. Saute chicken over medium heat until lightly browned on both sides. Place on broiler pan and bake in a 350 degree oven for about 40 minutes. Pour 1/2 c. hot water in bottom of pan after 10 minutes. Drizzle 2 tbsp. melted margarine over breasts the last ten minutes of baking. Serve with rice or buttered noodles. Serves 4.

## WGN RADIO BI-ANNUAL SALES /PROGRAMMING SEMINAR HUGE SUCCESS

DONALD A. GETZ, Vice President and General Sales Manager, made special awards at the sales seminar held in the J. Howard Wood Center on May 5th. Special sales awards of a pair of loving cups were given to DON DECARLO, DAN FABIAN, ED KEARNS, JACK KELLY and CHUCK WILSON for selling a million dollars of radio time in 1977.

A special award was presented to DON DECARLO for reaching \$2,000,000 of sales last year. Another special award was presented to ED KEARNS for having the biggest dollar increase in sales in one year. CONGRATULATIONS!

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## ELMER DONNELLY RETIRES

"SO long" to ELMER F. DONNELLY who retired on May 1 after 30 years of dedicated service to WGN Continental as a radio broadcast engineer. We have heard that he plans to spend his well-deserved leisure time relaxing in the Arizona sunshine. Perhaps he will indulge in his favorite hobby, woodworking, too. The best of luck to you, Elmer!

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## SYMPATHY

Ruth L. Blount, mother of William Blount (former WGN employee), passed away suddenly on April 24, 1978. The funeral was held on April 27 in North Judson, Indiana.

CONDOLENCES to: \* \*  
BILL CAMPBELL (Stagehand) on the loss of his father; and to  
LINDA SATO (Graphic Arts) on the loss of her grandmother.

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## NOTICE FROM PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT

Updated Chicago Tribune telephone directory pages (alphabetical and departmental sections) available in Personnel.

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## IMPORTANT FROM MEDICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

A reminder to all employees that the reenrollment cards for medical insurance and group life insurance must be completed and returned to Vivan Pappas by May 22. This applies to those who already have this coverage and new enrollees. If you do not wish either medical or group life insurance, please return blank cards to the Medical Service Department. Thank you for your cooperation.

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## **STATE OF MIND**

**If you think you are beaten, you are.**

**If you think you dare not, you don't.**

**If you'd like to win but think you can't,**

**It's almost a cinch that you won't.**

**If you think you'll lose, you've lost.**

**For out in the world you'll find**

**Success begins with a fellow's will—**

**It's all in the state of mind.**

**Author Unknown**

COMPANY ANNIVERSARIES - CONGRATULATIONS!

RONALD R. CONE -- Broadcast engineer in the radio area, observed his 5th anniversary on May 9.

ARLEIGH R. ERICKSON -- Broadcast engineer in the television area (Hancock transmitter), observed his 10th anniversary on May 5.

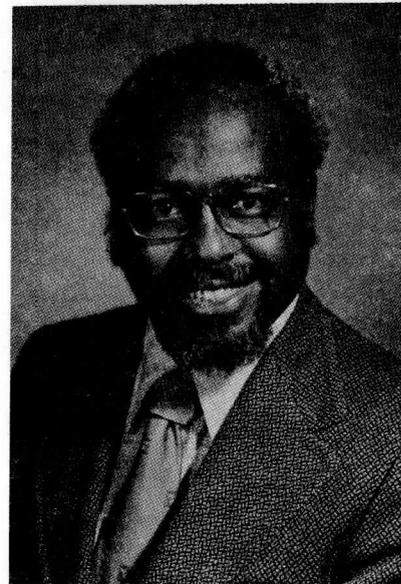
GEORGE E. ERVO -- Broadcast engineer in the television area, observed his 30th anniversary with WGN Continental on May 3. George and his wife, Stella, live in Arlington Hts. They have two daughters (both living "out west") and five grandchildren. George's hobbies are many and varied: music, travel, building of items for his home, and building of electronic devices. His work at WGN has been just as varied. In addition to the years he spent in the radio area, George has also been a cameraman, worked remotes and studio shows, and done engineering maintenance and construction.

ROY R. CONE -- Broadcast engineer in the television area, observes his 35th anniversary on May 23.

ALVIN JONES -- Broadcast engineer in the television area, observes his 10th anniversary on May 26. In addition to playing the piano, the electric guitar and electric bass, Al also enjoys cooking, photography (he completed a course in commercial and portrait photography from Ray Vogue School of Photography), flowers, ham radio, travel, and portrait painting in oil. He is currently working on a Masters Degree in Counseling and Guidance at Chicago State University.



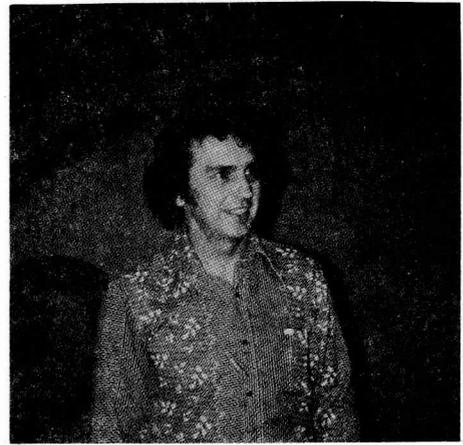
George Ervo



Alvin Jones

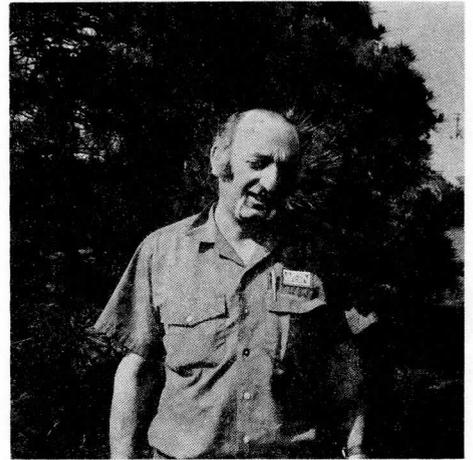
COMPANY ANNIVERSARIES - CONGRATULATIONS!

PATRICK A. DONAHUE - Stagehand, observed his 10th anniversary on May 6. Pat enjoys the outdoors and resides in Chicago.



Patrick Donahue

JOHN JONATHAN - Houseman/Building Dept. "John-Jon" and his wife, Mary live in Chicago. They have three children. They are anxiously awaiting the birth of their first grandchild in December.



John Jonathan

WELCOME TO THE WGN "family" --

JULIA SIPAL -- Newswriter

PAUL LAUDERMAN -- Security

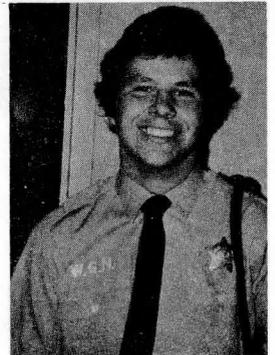
COMPANY PROMOTIONS CONGRATUALIONS!

GARY SULAK - promoted to apprentice operating engineer.

LAVERNE WILLIAMS - promoted to radio traffic systems copy desk.



Julia Sipal



Paul Lauderman



Gary Sulak



Laverne Williams

# REMEMBER VILLA SCALABRINI IN YOUR WILL

## PECARO: 4th LEADER IN WGN 54-YR. HISTORY



DAN T. PECARO

Daniel T. Pecaro, who will receive the Joint Civic Committee of Italian American's coveted Dante Award at the Como Inn May 19, is President and Chief Executive Officer of WGN Continental Broadcasting Co., with total responsibility for the operation of the company.

The man the JCC has singled out for his brilliant contribution to the industry and whose record is in the traditions of the immortal Dante is only the fourth president in the 54-year history of WGN.

WGN CONTINENTAL Broadcasting Co. is a wholly owned subsidiary of Tribune Company and is the licensee of WGN Radio and WGN Television in Chicago.

In addition to his top posts with the parent company, Pecaro also is President of the Colorado and Productions subsidiaries and is a director of WGN Continental Broadcasting Co. and all of its subsidiaries.

Born, reared and educated in Chicago, he attended Chicago's Schurz High, then enlisted in the Navy, serving in the South Pacific during World War II. Following his discharge, Pecaro earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Education at De Paul University, then joined the Chicago Public School system, where he taught and coached sports for five years.

Pecaro, who began working for WGN Radio as a night member of the traffic department while still maintaining his role as an educator, accepted a full-time position as a radio producer-director-writer in 1955.

Promoted to production supervisor in 1957, Pecaro by his creativity earned another promotion in 1958, to assistant program manager. Two years later he was named program manager for the radio station. He conceived many of the fine programs still on WGN today.

DAN PECARO moved to WGN

Television as program manager in 1962 and four years later was named group program manager for WGN Continental Television Stations. In May, 1966 he was elected a vice president of the company and the following April he became general manager of WGN-TV.

Elected to the Board of Directors of the parent company in May, 1968, Pecaro was named executive vice president and general manager of WGN

Television on Jan. 1, 1972. Two years later he became acting general manager of WGN Continental Broadcasting Co., and only two months later — on April 12, 1974 — he was elected to the top operating post in the company as executive vice president and general manager.

On May 8, 1975, Dan Pecaro was elected President and Chief Executive Officer of WGN Continental Broadcasting Co.

Chicago Tribune, Monday, May 15, 1978

## WGN's Pecaro wins Dante award

DANIEL T. PECARO, president and chief executive officer of WGN Continental Broadcasting Co., has been named this year's recipient of the Dante Award of the Joint Civic Committee of Italian Americans.

The annual award honors a member of the media for dedicated service to the City of Chicago and its Italian-American community.

Pecaro will receive the award Friday at the Dante Award Luncheon in the Como Inn.

WALLY PHILLIPS, WGN morning radio personality, will be master of ceremonies for the luncheon.

This is the seventh year that the Joint Civic Committee has presented the award. Previous winners include Phillips; John Severino, former general manager of WLS-TV; Emmet Dedmon, former Chicago Sun-Times executive and Clayton Kirkpatrick, editor of The Tribune.

From Our Readers

Good Salesmanship

We enjoyed Mr. Del Colliano's splendid article in the March issue quoting the distinguished president of CBS Radio, Mr. Sam Cook Digges. I would like to take exception, however, to the beginning of the quote from Mr. Digges in which he states: "The best thing to happen to radio is to have television sold out at high rates" as well as the closing sentence in your article: "The bitter medicine for radio is—as TV goes, so goes the economic fate of radio."

It is my considered opinion that these statements are not indicative of the high caliber that is expressed and represented by CBS Radio Sales, nor by any person who is out trying to sell a medium. A salesman does not wait for something else to happen, such as television being sold out at high rates. A salesman tries to make something happen himself or herself. While it may be true, to a certain extent, that advertisers may have a budget for electronic media advertising and will switch some of it to radio if television is not available, that is a relatively unsalesman-like way to think and operate.

To sit back and wait for television to be sold out is not the prerequisite of good salesmanship.

Donald A. Getz  
WGN Continental Broadcasting Co.  
Chicago

To sit back and wait for television to be sold out is not the prerequisite of good salesmanship. So we say, "Amen." As a matter of fact, many aggressive radio operators are now reaping extra revenue through time-consuming co-op advertising campaigns, and convincing print advertisers to spend more on radio. This is hardly a "sit back and wait" attitude. But distinguished executives, such as Sam Digges and others, feel radio's prosperity is directly related to TV. Fact: Much of radio's major advertising dollars hang in limbo until TV budgets are firm. Like it or not, the advertiser determines radio's relationship to TV regarding earnings. In effect, they have prescribed the bitter medicine radio must swallow. (J.D.C.)

REMEMBER NITTA SCATARRINI IN YOUR MIND

PECARO: AIR LEADER IN WGN 24-YR. HISTORY

STYL. YAM. JOH. ART.



Villa Olivia C.C.  
Bartlett, Ill.



# GOLF OUTING

JUNE 17<sup>th</sup>

TEE OFF :

**6:10** am

PLEASE RETURN SHEET TO DICK PETRASH

MONEY AND RESERVATIONS MUST BE IN BY JUNE 10th

WGN GOLF OUTING REGISTRATION AND DINNER RESERVATION

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

FOURSOME RESERVATION:

WIFE/HUSBAND \_\_\_\_\_

GREENS FEE \$8.75

DINNER 7.25

TOTAL PER PERSON: \$16.00

GARTS EXTRA AT - 11.00 (pay at pro shop) Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ cart(s).

EXTRA FORMS AVAILABLE FROM THE MAIL ROOM OR DICK PETRASH

# Down-home <sup>Chicago</sup> Tribune <sup>Magazine</sup> with Donahue

May 14, 1978

The "best talk show host there is" has built a strong following by taking the major issues of the day and making them identifiable to his audience—both at home and in the studio—of middle-class women.



Phil Donahue appears perplexed by a comment from author-ironoclast Gore Vidal, a recent guest on his daytime TV show.

By Cheryl Lavin

Photos by Charles Osgood

The ballroom of the Chicago Hyatt Regency is jammed with strapless dresses and Barbra Streisand hair-dos, black ties and double-breasted tuxedos, out-of-season untans and out-of-season fruit. It's the Variety Club Ball honoring Phil Donahue on the 10th anniversary of his television show.

The turnout is impressive: From Chicago, Lee Phillip, Fahey Flynn, Ernie Banks, the Mayor and Heather, Ernie Banks, the Mayor and Heather. And from the larger world, Gloria Steinem, severe in black silk pants and periwinkle tunic, aviator glasses, and parted-in-the-middle hair; Dear Abby and Dear Ann in twin fishskin sequined dresses with matching hair-dos; Billy Carter, Barbara Eden, F. Lee Bailey, Gore Vidal, Paul Anka, and of course Marlo Thomas, that woman in Donahue's life.

They are here to pay tribute. After 20 years in broadcasting, starting as a prop-man, working in Adrian, Mich.,

Cleveland, and Dayton, doing the same talk show for the last decade, and slowly building a following, Phil Donahue is suddenly the hottest TV talk show host in the country. Hot in New York, Norfolk, and Nashville, with 8 million viewers in 142 markets. And Donahue, always attractive, is now termed "sexy." Always stimulating, he's now "provocative." Yesterday, he was local and low-key, today he is national and visible. Yet because he does a daytime show, many men and working women say such things as "Phil Donahue — didn't he chase Connie Stevens around the swimming pool in 'Hawaiian Eye'?"

Donahue, 42, lapsed Catholic, ex-bank teller, hotshot second-baseman for the WGN softball team, divorced father of five with custody of his four teen-aged sons, has come a long way from his radio beginnings reading commercials in South Bend.

His one-hour talk show (seen in Chicago at 11 a.m. Monday through Friday on Channel 9), which focuses on one guest or topic a day, is the only nationally syndicated program broad-

casting from Chicago and finally won him an Emmy as best daytime TV host in 1977.

As Donahue tells it, his is a different kind of talk show: "We don't have a band, we don't bring on Henny Youngman and Charo and then Norm Crosby. We use the audience and the callers; I'll get a call from a woman who will tell me she's had an abortion, or that her husband is impotent, or that she's frigid. But we do have celebrities too — they make me look like a big act."

Why the sudden publicity, the spreads in national magazines, the \$125-a-plate dinner? "We've always been this good," Donahue says. But fame came when the show finally found a successful New York time slot ("News is what New York says is news, and success is what New York says is success," he notes). The Today Show was interested in him as a replacement for Tom Brokaw; and the publicity over the Bachelor Father finding That Girl swept the gossip columns. Fortune already was there: Donahue was reported to be making \$250,000 plus a percentage of the gross

under his old contract. TV insiders say he could be up to a half million with his new six-year contract with Multimedia, which owns his syndicated show.

And at the Hyatt Regency, this is his night. Literally. Mayor Bilandic has proclaimed it Phil Donahue Day in Chicago. Important guests have flown in. His four sons, tall and handsome, are there. He and Thomas make a striking couple: his hair white, hers black, his black tux, her white dress. Not bad for a one-time altar boy who blew his first broadcasting audition because of a "nasal twang."

By the time Donahue's brown Chevrolet Caprice pulls up in front of the WGN studios on Chicago's Northwest Side after the 30-minute drive in from Winnetka, his office is abustle. The time is usually about 9:45 when he walks in, and his producers, Pat McMillen, Darlene Hayes, and Sheri Singer, who have the primary responsibility for booking shows, have been at work for an hour.

There's a pot of coffee going and a small-screen TV is tuned to AM Chicago on Channel 7. Nobody watches unless an upcoming or possible guest is scheduled. Boxes of videotape are stacked against the walls and bookshelves are filled with tomes on pop psychology and every nuance of sexual behavior. The phones are ringing. A hairdresser is being arranged for a future guest. Broadway star Patricia Elliott, who has been coaxed into discussing her self-imposed celibacy. A chart listing shows for the next two months is being revised. McMillen leafs through items clipped from newspapers and magazines for ideas; the show eats up an incredible 240 topics a year.

Donahue enters, dressed in jeans, a powder blue button-down shirt, and leather jacket, exchanges good mornings, and moves into his barren, pictureless, windowless, cinder-block office. A reporter from Us magazine is there to interview him and a college student majoring in radio-TV is taking notes on the workings of the office. The day's guest is Ted Knight, the pompous Ted Baxter of the old Mary Tyler Moore show now plugging his new situation comedy about a man who runs an escort service. Donahue is often uneasy with show business people. "I'm more comfortable with Bert Lance than Bert Reynolds," he says.

Singer enters with a column on sexual exploitation on TV. "This article talks about how sex is replacing violence on TV," she says. "Maybe we can get Knight talking about how women will be used on his show."

"What kind of sociology are you going to get from Ted Knight?" Donahue replies. Feet up on the desk, wire-rim glasses on his trade-mark blue eyes, fingers moving through his thick white hair, he quickly scans the article.

Then comes the first crisis. McMillen comes in to report that Secretary of Agriculture Bob Bergland has just cancelled his appearance. At first Donahue is complacent. "I saw him on 'Meet the Press' and he was awful. Let's just put on an empty chair and say the Secretary of Agriculture chooses not to be with us." But then the Irish temper starts building. The show had been confirmed. It was to be a confrontation between the secretary and farmers, the kind of show Donahue really enjoys.

"Do you mind if I get on the phone and try?" he asks McMillen. "Tell me exactly what happened," he says while dialing.

"I can't fill you in in two seconds."  
"Yes, you can."

## Audiences identify

*continued from page 47*

Chicago he lived alone, dated a stewardess and other bright, attractive young women, and even looked at some downtown apartments. "I don't think you can take a 40-year-old father of five and put him in a Chicago high-rise and tell him to go play," he says. "That would be the fantasy of some unhappily married men, but I don't think it could translate into reality. I think most 40-year-old males who are suddenly paying child support and alimony and walk out into the candy-store world with the attitude 'Bring on the breads' are remarried within a year."

He is delighted with the custody arrangement, though somewhat tied down. (His daughter lives in New Mexico with her mother, who remarried shortly after the divorce.) "I don't go to any openings. I don't do the downtown thing. I'd like to, like anybody else, but I can't very well go to Detroit for a week in May on remotes and then be home a night and do Sweetwater's. My guilt wheel would not allow me." But he and Thomas are beginning to be seen more around town.

Mostly, Donahue, an avid sportsman who loves to ski and golf, goes home at night to his five-bedroom house in Winnetka, a masculine place with a pool table dominating the living room. He recently had an apartment installed in the basement for the Yugoslavian couple that takes care of the house and his four sons, aged 13-19. All of the boys except the youngest work after school. Donahue is not one to throw his money around, though he says he enjoys being able to travel, usually with two of his sons.

As a single parent he feels a strong responsibility to create a more open environment than was his own. "When they use the word chick I say 'A chick is a helpless bird,' and they say 'Dad, there you go with your feminist stuff again.'" Donahue, raised in a strict, Catholic environment — "Women were an occasion of sin" — says he was a virgin when he married and recalls being shocked the first time he saw his sister in a low-cut dress. He's trying to raise his sons in a more sexually open atmosphere: "I've given them sex lectures. I drew the ovaries and the fallopian tube. The next morning I saw the paper and it looked like a psychotic had been drawing on it. You could see the tension. I'm as awkward as any parent when it comes to talking about sex."

So much of Donahue's success is due to his audience's identification with him. He is one of them: a good Notre Dame boy, not the brightest ("I like the audience to feel I hold the record for stupid questions"), always polite (he says of Dick Cavett who told guest Timothy Leary, "You're full of crap." "I don't think he should have said that; it doesn't take any talent. The only purpose it has is to call attention to yourself"), a gentleman (he always made sure a visiting reporter was introduced, found the coffee, had a chair), a good host ("It is neurotically important to me that the women in my audience have a good time at my show."), a homebody (he gave an interview discussing laundry soaps and girls' dress sizes).

## Donahue prefers syndication to the perils of the network.

*continued from page 21*

through a couple and their friend who acted as surrogate mother. Retired General Motors president Ed Cole debated Ralph Nader. Young widows discussed their husbands who had died of heart attacks. A father who sexually abused his young daughter and a woman who had been molested as a child discussed their experiences on a show that tackled the last taboo — incest.

One of the most moving of Donahue's shows was never seen in Chicago: the home birth of a baby. The film was graphic but totally absorbing. Deeb questions what he calls WGN-TV's "caveman mentality" for not allowing the film on the air and rebukes Donahue for not fighting harder to show it.

The love, trust, and intimacy shown between the couple on the program has rarely been captured for a TV show. She was sitting up, leaning against her husband for most of the ordeal. And the quip of the couple's 4-year-old son when the head of the baby first appeared — "Good. Mom, it's a puppy" — brought spontaneous laughter from the studio audience watching on a monitor.

"Having your own talk show is an opportunity afforded few people," Donahue says. "It should happen to everybody. I've met government leaders, professional athletes, show people, scientists, people going to jail, people getting out of jail, homosexuals, lesbians, surgeons, a colleague of Hitler, and the pilot who dropped the bomb on Hiroshima." He says it has provided him with a tremendous opportunity for growth, and he readily admits he's used the show's many psychiatrist-guests to answer his own questions.

"I grew up in a world where all the images were white. God was white, all the people in power were men. Everybody at the Last Supper was a man. The blessed Trinity was two Men and a Spirit. You can't come out of this experience without being a sexist and a racist. The show introduced me to Gloria Steinem and others who said

things that were threatening because I knew they were talking about me." Steinem says she has seen him move in 10 years from a position of curiosity to advocacy on feminist issues.

When his marriage of 16 years to Marge Cooney ended (they were married a year out of college, when he was 22, she 20) Donahue was shaken. Friends remember he would freeze at the mention of the word divorce. "When I grew up people who got divorced were failures. They were almost fallen. But my biggest fear was losing the children, not seeing them grow up."

Donahue blames part of the divorce on his attitude: "I was a workaholic. I was driven, full of ambition. I thought being a father came automatically. I am appalled at how ill-equipped I was." But he is quick to add, "You can't change overnight."

Though he has been quoted as saying "What young American boy wouldn't like to host the Today Show?" the answer is he wouldn't. "Five years ago I probably would have taken it, but five years ago I wasn't in New York and attracting NBC's attention. On the Today Show I would have eight minutes, on my show I have an hour. In syndication, if someone doesn't like me, they can cancel me in Peoria but I'm still alive. With a network, a vice-president, while he's shaving, can cancel my whole act."

Donahue has no intention of leaving his safe berth to move into the dangerous terrain of prime-time TV. "We don't belong at night. We're not a night-time show. I can't compete with Barretta as long as the decision what to watch is left up to the whole family. And I would not want to base my career on being opposite Johnny Carson," Donahue explains. He sees himself eventually moving into an elder statesman role as producer of classy documentaries. In fact, his new contract allows him to produce some special projects.

For six months after moving to  
*continued on page 48*



Like a minister after church, Donahue meets the audience as they file out of the studio.

To Bergland's secretary: "Does he understand our problem? This is not like the Tonight Show when he's on next to Henny Youngman. He is the show. Does he know we have farmers coming from all over the country at their own expense? Does he know the energy that's been expended? Now three days before the show — two, really — we're called and told that he can't make it."

Now he's really getting into it. His secretary rising: "It looks to me like the secretary just doesn't want to be on our show. I'm wondering out loud if there is a real appreciation for the nature of the commitment. We're going to have to go with an empty chair." Silence. "Look, I've got to go. I've got a show to do." Silence. "All right, but you're leaving us with egg on our faces in 140 cities." (The show did not go on with an empty chair. Several farmers, already scheduled, filled in for Bergland.)

The show is live at 11 a.m. Chicago time. At 10:40 Donahue reaches for his work clothes, a signal for the producers to leave. He used to wear a cheap suit and a skinny tie, according to Bill Willis, manager of public relations for WGN who has known Donahue since Dayton. Oleg Cassini, a onetime guest on the show, coordinated a wardrobe of suits and ties, and today Donahue looks like a well-heeled banker in a gray-flannel suit, white button-down shirt, and maroon tie.

McMillen bursts in with another last-minute emergency: Knight has brought two actresses from the show with him and there's only one extra microphone. With his back to the women in the adjoining office, Donahue zips up. "Give them one of mine."

Standing out in the main room, several feet away from the mirror (he's far-sighted), he slaps some makeup on his nose to make it appear less red and runs the only thing handy, a wire wig brush, through his thick hair. He's off to Room 115 to meet the guest and give his speech. "They have a right to meet me before they go out there and I have an obligation to meet them. I help them relax. They get to know what kind of guy I am. And then I tell them about the audience. I remind them that they are a catalyst for conversation, not an answering service. And that it is just as important to me that the woman in the fifth row gets up and tells how she feels as it is for them."

McMillen walks past the mothers and tots lined up for Bozo's Circus to the Donahue line outside of Studio Two and selects a dozen of the youngest, most-attractive women and shows them to the seats around the stage. The rest of the 200 women who have waited 16 months for their tickets (one member of the staff does nothing but handle tickets) file in. They're well-dressed, well-groomed.

Overheard in line: "I just love him." "He's so charismatic." "I feel like he's one of us." (The mail comes in addressed "Dear Phil.")

McMillen, who looks like Farrah Fawcett-Majors' older sister and has been with Donahue since the Dayton days along with Hayes and executive producer Dick Mincer, warms up the audience. "Do you all have a question for Ted Knight? You don't? What are you going to do, just sit there looking pretty?" She tells them about the article on exploitation. "Now that might make an interesting topic." She tells them they can ask Knight about his personal life, about issues, anything. "But if you want to see the whole Donahue crew go down the tube, ask

him: 'How did you get your start in show biz?' Phil gets real nervous when he does shows with celebrities or on fashion and makeup, so help him out. And remember, we want natural reactions, so if you want to applaud, or boo, or hiss, go ahead."

From the back of the studio, Donahue appears, muttering all the cliches they're thinking. "You look so much better in person. I didn't know you were so gray." He's shaking hands, bending, whispering, kissing, hugging. "Anyone here pregnant?" He passes out Bozo buttons. "Who's come the farthest?" They call out: "Terre Haute." "Sioux City." "Fisher." "We kill 'em in Fisher." Donahue shoots back.

He walks up to one of the dozen men in the audience. "Look how thrilled he is to be here." Shaking hands. "I'm Donahue, sir. I do the show."

"Any Catholics here?" He waves the microphone over them. "How's everything in the cheap seats?" The lights are hot and the makeup is melting. "How much time now? One minute? God, I'm so nervous."

At 6 feet he's taller than he appears on television and thinner. He fights to stay close to 170 with Fresca and light beer. The extra pounds make him jowly. His head appears too large for his body, his nose too big for his head. Those vivid blue eyes are even brighter against the royal blue set.

Donahue introduces Knight, who in orange shirt and matching pancake jogs up the center aisle, white hair and teeth gleaming. Thirty seconds to show time. Knight is sitting on a block on the stage (the more serious guests open at a table) knee-to-knee with the audience, chatting with the front row as he has been instructed. "Are we on the air? Is this how we do the show? We just sit and look at each other?"

The show is on. No fanfare, no credits, no opening theme. No Ed McMahon. Donahue jumps on the stage and puts his head next to Knight's. "Who's grayer?" Knight does an impression of Lowell Thomas. He eats up two minutes

teaching a woman to pronounce his real, long Polish name, full of k's and z's. "What is Mary Tyler Moore really like?" "What are the old cast members doing?" Seven minutes past 11.

Donahue is working the audience, moving from aisle to aisle, seeming to just know where the questions are. He is constantly listening to the audience as they whisper among themselves, hearing their comments, watching their faces to see who wants to get on.

Questions from the audience to Ted Knight: "What do you think of the news media?" Long pause. "I think they're v-e-r-y newsworthy." "What do you think of women and women's lib?" Leering grin. And in Ted Baxter vowels: "I lo-v-e women." So much for issues.

Ted Knight's address is flashed on the screen, a device to keep up the sense of communication. Then comes a commercial. "This is the best looking audience we've had all week," Donahue says. "No, really, I mean it." The starlets come out. One is busting out of her dress and Donahue hands her a pin-on mike. "Here, you better put this on yourself."

When the show is over, he takes a few more questions after the cameras have stopped, a bit of public relations. "You know I'm grateful. Now I want you all to go straight home. Don't talk to any strange men. But first I'd like to say good-bye to each of you at the door." He shakes hands with a politician's two-handed grip, left hand over right, signs autographs, poses for pictures, one arm around Marilyn, the other around Louise. The women file out and pile into their station wagons for the long ride back to suburbia. And Donahue crashes in his office, drained.

The show works because Donahue has hit on an image and formula that appeals to his largely middle-class, middle-aged, white, suburban, female audience. He is bright, but not cocky. Sexy, but not threatening. Empathetic, but not condescending. Liberal but not irresponsible. He can be hokey: sexual

intercourse is "doing it," a show on asexuality is about "not doing it." He has endearing (or maddening) mannerisms: he stammers, scratches his head, opens his eyes wide, rubs his hand over his face. He projects a boyish charm and inquisitive mind that turns on women of all ages.

And better than any other talk show host, he is able to translate the major issues of the day to a down-home level that Everywoman can identify with. On a show dealing with male mid-life crisis, several men whose search for themselves led to broadening their sexual horizons were grilled by a woman who demanded, "Isn't this just a fancy excuse to have an affair?" And Donahue steps up close, narrows his eyes, and says, "That's right. It's pretty hard to feel sorry for ol' Dad, when ol' Dad is sneaking off to the No-Tell Motel."

But that technique can go too far. His most annoying fault, and one his producers occasionally call him on, is going for the easy joke. On a show with people who have returned to life after having been declared technically dead, he asks a man who "died" in a fall, "Wally was your underwear clean?" On a show on sexual problems, a troubled woman asks, "What do you call a mature person who has sexual feelings but refrains from sex because she isn't married?" "Very patient," is Donahue's glib reply.

Donahue has been chided for keeping his opinions to himself. Tribune TV critic Gary Deeb calls Donahue "the best talk show host there is," but says "He doesn't say anything terribly controversial. I don't see him taking any big risks." Yet, in fact, Donahue was so sympathetic to gay rights on the shows he did with Anita Bryant, an enormously popular guest, that he still gets angry letters questioning his own sexual preferences.

An occasional Ted Knight aside, the bulk of the shows tackle deep, sometimes difficult, always timely issues. Artificial insemination was presented

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## Eight million watched them fall in love.



Donahue and Marlo Thomas stroll on Michigan Avenue.

Two of the most private people in show business — Phil Donahue and Marlo Thomas — began their affair in front of a live audience of 200 women with eight million voyeurs at home. Thomas was in town plugging her movie, "Thieves," and the Donahue Show was part of the talk show circuit. She and Donahue had met once four years before when she did his show in Dayton to publicize her special, "Free To Be . . . You And Me." He had made a good first impression: "He was wonderful, he was really a good interviewer." But nothing happened: "He was married at the time, and I was going with someone, and it was late at night."

By the second time around, Donahue was divorced and Thomas was uninvolved. The conversation got hot and heavy in a hurry. Donahue asked, "How important is love?" and Thomas replied, "I like having a man in my life. I like someone to love me, and I like being in love. I've had very serious and loving relationships with men." Donahue pressed, "How are you when there's no one in your life?" Thomas confessed, "Depressed."

The pace quickened. They both had so much to say that Donahue, the most

polite of talk show hosts, stepped on one of Thomas' lines and kept going. And so did she. "This is what happens when an equal man and an equal woman get together," Thomas quipped. By the end of the show she repeated for America the valentine she had delivered during the break: "You are loving and generous and wonderful and whoever is the woman in your life is lucky." And she left.

The couple got a break: There was no woman in Donahue's life. Thomas recalls the interview: "A lot of clicks happened. He kept saying things and I would think, 'What an interesting thing to comment on.'" But she is quick to add, "I don't go on talk shows looking for boyfriends. I'm not a headhunter." Fortunately Donahue has no such inhibitions.

To make a long story short, the two have been hand-holding across several states and islands for over a year, managing to speak to each other several times a day and spend almost half the week together. This in spite of the fact Thomas lives in California and travels around the country on behalf of ERA and other projects and Donahue tapes his show five days a week in Chicago. C.L.

# See them in their dreams

The voice of the Cubs, Jack Brickhouse, would like to be the "new Maurice Chevalier," Mayor Blandic and Bill Veck would like to run a newspaper. Wally Phillips would like to cure cancer.

"These are some of the dream jobs that Chicago personalities chose when asked, 'What would you like to do if you weren't doing what you're doing now?'"

"If I could I'd be the new Maurice Chevalier. And if I had my own way they'd put me on my tombstone. Here lies the guy who did the world's greatest song and dance routine to 'Tea for Two.'" Brickhouse said in answer to The Sun-Times dream-job query.



For Jack Brickhouse every little breeze doesn't whisper loving to be a newspaper publisher, but he'd still like to be the best song and dance man.

Mayor Blandic said a job as a publisher, editor or owner of a newspaper would appeal to him, too.

Radio show host Phillips Chicago White Sox owner Veck laughed when the question was put to him. "What else can a one-legged man who can't see and can't hear do [but own a ball team?]" he asked, then answered he would either get involved in law or helping the American Indians or open a small newspaper.



Another person with medical leanings is television talk-show host Phil Donahue, who answered, "I'd like to know what it's emotionally like to be a doctor. I think it would be gratifying to make people feel better."

Rich Mellman, owner of the Lettuce Entertain You restaurant chain, casts a vote for medicine, too. "Realistically I'd probably be a psychiatrist." Further analysis of his



Citizen Blandic? Chicago's mayor thinks it would interest to be a newspaper publisher, editor or owner.

dreams, however, reveals that his "first choice would be to switch careers with one of my partners, Steve Stone [White Sox pitcher]."

TV personality Ray Kayner set his sights on being a travel writer. "I get excited just being near someone who's been all over the world." Channel 2 anchorman Bill Kurtis would like to travel, too, and take his camera along. "I'd be a full-time photographer, starting off in Africa, I think, going back to the research team hoping that I might be in on the breakthrough."

Richard Stern, novelist and professor of English at the University of Chicago, would like to explore the subtleties of economics.

like to have one shot at the nation's top job. "I'd like to be a one-term president, but only for one term because there's a lot of things that I'd like to do that would keep me from running for re-election."

In the midst of all this dreaming Sun-Times columnist Mike Royko fantasized himself as a maritime radio operator in the merchant ma-



And for good measure, conductor Sir Georg Solti would like to explore the subtleties of economics.

times traveling from one exotic port to another, meeting beautiful women and having tempestuous romances. "I'd break their hearts as I sailed off looking over the rail with my friend Barry Fitzgerald. The only writing I would do would be bad checks."

Chicago Ballet director Geraldine Freund would switch to painting if she wasn't what she refers to as "A Chorus Junkie," while Sir Georg Solti, conductor of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra would seek the beat of the economics field.

Sunday Sun-Times, May 14, 1978

Chicago Sun-Times, Tuesday, May 16, 1978

Chicago's Phil Donahue trekked to Pikesville, Md., Sunday and said, "I don't mind doing this talk show because I think I look like a gynecologist." Further: "I am learning about all the things you women are going through, like I now know that Downy goes in the rinse cycle." Still further: "Too many women 'haven't been kissed by their husbands in 20 years,'" and those same husbands "would shoot anyone who did."