

Closed Circuit

THE WGN FAMILY LETTER

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July 27, 1978

ROBERT E. HENLEY AND WAYNE R. VRIESMAN

NAMED TO NEW POSTS AT

WGN CONTINENTAL BROADCASTING COMPANY

ROBERT E. HENLEY has been named President and General Manager of WGN Continental Broadcasting Company's two new California radio properties, KGRA (AM) and KCTC (FM) in Sacramento.

WAYNE R. VRIESMAN has been named Station Manager of WGN Radio, succeeding Henley.

Both announcements were made by DANIEL T. PECARO, President and Chief Executive Officer, WGN Continental Broadcasting Company.

Henley will have total responsibility for the day-to-day operations of WGN's new California properties.

A 19-year veteran, Henley started as a newswriter and after various advancements became WGN Television News Director within seven years. In 1967, he was named Program Manager, WGN Radio, and was elected a vice president of WGN Continental Broadcasting Company in 1971. Three years later, he was named Station Manager, WGN Radio, the position he held until May, 1975, when he was named Vice President and General Manager - Radio, WGN Continental Broadcasting Company.

Vriesman, an 18-year veteran, joined WGN in 1960 as a newswriter after earning his master's degree in Journalism from Northwestern University.

In 1964, he was promoted to News Producer for WGN Television and, after a year as night News Supervisor for both radio and television, was transferred to Denver to head the news operation of KWGN Television. He returned to head WGN Radio and WGN Television's News department last year and shortly thereafter was elected a Vice President of WGN Continental.

Our Best Wishes and Congratulations to Mr. Henley and Mr. Vriesman in their new positions.

We will all miss you, Bob.

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WGN RADIO AND WGN TELEVISION

WELCOMES

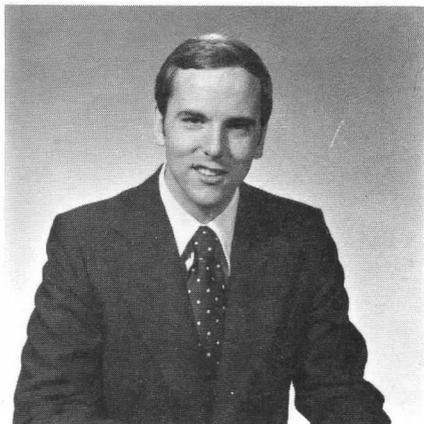
METEOROLOGIST TOM SKILLING

THOMAS E. SKILLING, No. 1 rated meteorologist on Milwaukee television, became a member of the WGN Radio and WGN Television family.

SKILLING, who joins ROGER TRIEMSTRA, will officially begin his duties on August 13 forecasting the weather on the 10 p.m. telecast of "JACK TAYLOR and NEWSNINE" and on radio's "THE WALLY PHILLIPS SHOW," among other appearances.

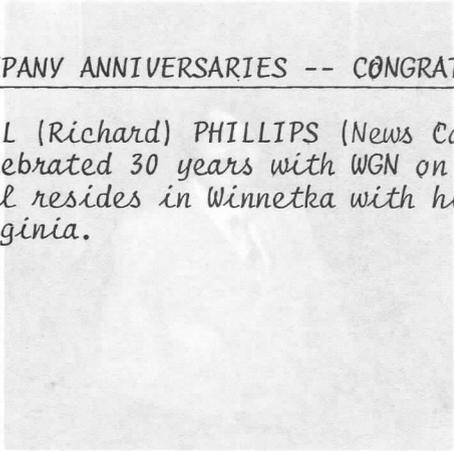
The 26-year old member of the American Meteorological Society began his weather forecasting career at the unbelievable age of 14, when he was hired by WKKD in Aurora, Illinois. After three years, he joined WLXT-TV in Aurora and still kept up his schooling during the day.

In 1970, he moved to Madison, Wisconsin, where he did the nightly weather on WKOW-TV and WTSO Radio for four years, while attending the University of Wisconsin. Following a year at WTLV-TV in Jacksonville, Florida, he returned to Wisconsin in 1975 to join WITI-TV in Milwaukee, where he soon became the city's top meteorologist.



COMPANY ANNIVERSARIES -- CONGRATULATIONS!

BILL (Richard) PHILLIPS (News Cameraman) celebrated 30 years with WGN on July 6. Bill resides in Winnetka with his wife Virginia.



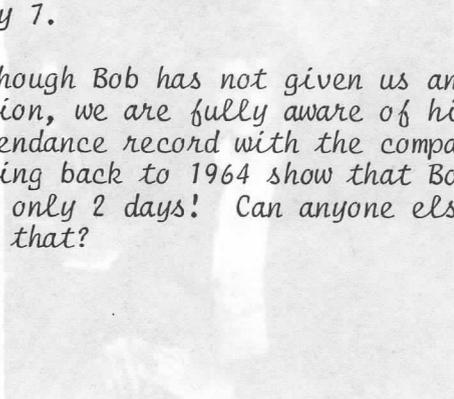
Bill Phillips



Bill Phillips

ROBERT C. SHONEROCK - Engineer in the television area, observed twenty-five years with WGN on July 7.

Although Bob has not given us any further information, we are fully aware of his outstanding attendance record with the company. Records dating back to 1964 show that Bob has been absent for only 2 days! Can anyone else in the company top that?



Robert C. Shonerock

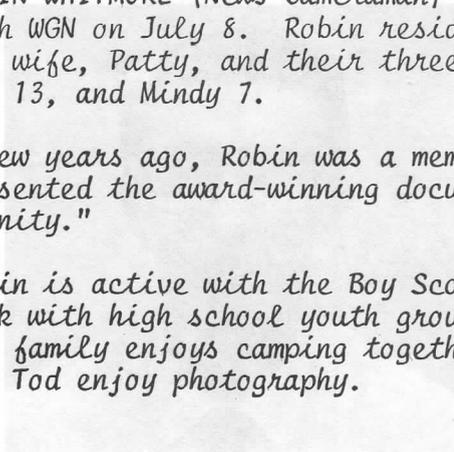


Bob Shonerock

ROBIN WHITMORE (News Cameraman) celebrated 10 years with WGN on July 8. Robin resides in Palatine with his wife, Patty, and their three children - Tod, 15; Tim 13, and Mindy 7.

A few years ago, Robin was a member of the crew that presented the award-winning documentary, "What Price Dignity."

Robin is active with the Boy Scouts and he and Patty work with high school youth groups in Palatine. The family enjoys camping together and Robin and son Tod enjoy photography.



Robin Whitmore



Robin Whitmore

COMPANY ANNIVERSARIES -- CONGRATULATIONS!

HANK SURMA (Assistant Manager, Radio Traffic Systems) celebrated 5 years with WGN on July 16.

Hank is part of a team in our Bias Department which is responsible for all facets of the day-to-day radio traffic operations which involves billing, copy instructions, availabilities and all programming formats which feed into a computer that establishes the daily log.

Hank enjoys sports and photography. He and his wife Debbie reside in Oak Lawn.



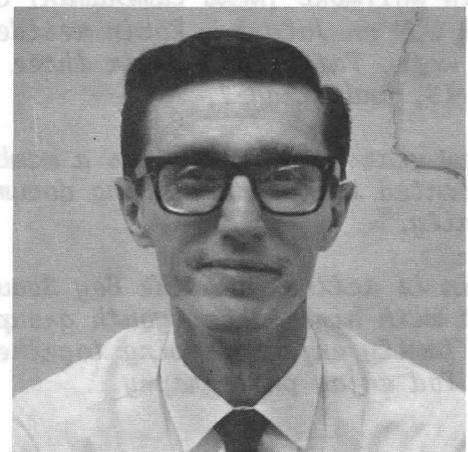
Hank Surma

RAYMOND P. KASPRZAK --Engineer in the television area, observed his tenth anniversary with WGN on July 21. He and his wife, Kathryn, live in Streamwood with their two sons and two daughters whose ages range from 6 to 14. Ray's hobbies are freelance photography, playing the organ, tennis, biking, and indoor and outdoor gardening. You name it, Ray's done it in engineering -- remote and studio audio, video shading, technical director, slo-mo, Chyron, RF room, maintenance, camera, MC., etc.



Ray Kasprzak

JOHN R. LOPATKA -- Engineer in the television transmitter at the Hancock Building, observed ten years with WGN on July 21.



John Lopatka

COMPANY ANNIVERSARIES -- CONGRATULATIONS!

ED NEWMAN celebrated his 5th anniversary with WGN on July 23. He is a graduate of Quincy College, majoring in mathematics.

In his present position at WGN, his duties encompass the customer service area with regard to billing complaints.

Ed was a Vietnam combat veteran of the U.S. Army in the artillery field.

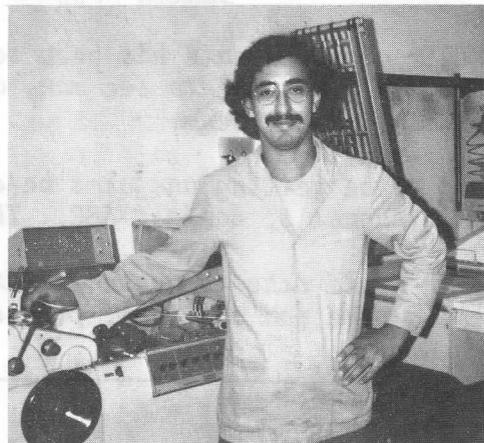
Ed enjoys photography and fishing.



Ed Newman

WELCOME TO THE WGN "family"

JESSE JUAREZ (Duplicating)



Jesse Juarez

NEW ARRIVALS

OUR HEARTIEST CONGRATULATIONS TO:

Fred A. Geyer (engineering office), upon the birth of his third grandchild, David, on Thursday, July 20, in Elk Mound, Wisconsin. The baby's proud parents are Steve and Jan (Geyer) Franck.

Paul H. Hummel (engineer) and his wife, Chris, upon the birth of their second child, David Paul, born on Friday, July 21, in Evanston Hospital. David weighed 9 lbs., 6-1/2 oz.

EVERETT WILLIAMS (artist) and his wife, Georgine, are the proud parents of their second child, Everett Jr. born on July 25. Everett Jr. weighed 8 lbs., 14 oz. Their little girl, Erica, 2 years old is happy to have a little brother.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO:

Dave Abrahams -- July 31
Mike Cusack -- July 31
Carl Anderson -- August 2
John Imburgia -- August 3
Peggy Carolan -- August 3
Dave Olzeski -- August 3
Tom Kudsk -- August 4

Arleigh Erickson -- August 4
Art Ambrozewski -- August 5
John Derdzinski -- August 5
Don Weiner -- August 6
Merc Schneider -- August 8
Fred Popp -- August 8
Rick Talley -- August 12

WGN WOMEN'S SOFTBALL TEAM

Yes, the great WGN WOMEN'S SOFTBALL TEAM has been formed, thanks to the following 14 wonderful ladies:

Mary Brown
Gail Bruce
Liz Coggs
Kay Dohm
Pat Golata
Cheryl Grodecki
Judith Hoffman

Jane Mendez
Kimberly Munch
Mae Neace
Nancy Seitz
Meschill Vargas
Erin Wendorf
Joanne Williams

Our first practice date has been set for Tuesday, August 1, at 5:30 right outside here at WGN. We hope to see many of our friends out there to cheer us on and generate enthusiasm for the team.

We hope to be getting uniforms before our first game, which is tentatively set for Tuesday, August 8, against ABC. The exact time and place will be announced later.

Also, we would like to request that if any of those creative minds out there can suggest a name for our team, please write it down and send it to JANE MENDEZ, Room 125.

QUARTER-CENTURIAN

Plans are now being made for the SECOND ANNUAL WGN QUARTER-CENTURIAN get-together. This group is composed of persons who have worked for WGN for 25 years. A letter will be going out very soon to all persons who are eligible. If you don't receive your letter or have additional names to give us, please contact ROY CONE, JIM FEELEY, VIRGINIA ROGERS or TONY SULLA.

GET WELL WISHES to:

Delores Koltz at
Lutheran General Hospital
1775 Dempster
Park Ridge, Ill. 60068 --- Room 632 - Bed 5

MORE GET WELL WISHES TO: Dick Erlenbach and Dick Jungers at home.

MERRI DEE RECEIVES AWARD

MERRI DEE received an award from the Special Olympics Program of Illinois for her "interest, enthusiasm and unselfish efforts which gave special children a chance to learn, a chance to grow and a chance to know the joy of sports and athletic competition through participation in the Special Olympics."

Signed by: Senator Edward Kennedy
Mrs. Eunice Shriver

CHANGE OF TELEPHONE NUMBERS

JACK JACOBSON ---- 224 & 225
WAYNE VRIESMAN --- 392 & 393 Please change your directory

RECIPE OF THE WEEK

ZUCCHINI CAKE

3 eggs - beat until light ... add
2 cups sugar
1 cup oil
2 cups GRATED ZUCCHINI
3 cups sifted flour
1 tsp. salt
1 tsp. baking soda
1/4 tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. cinnamon

Sift dry ingredients into mixture mix. Add 1/2 cup chopped (baking) nuts and 1/2 cups fresh chopped cranberries.

Bake 350 degrees for 1-1/4 or 1-1/2 hours ... until brown.... test.

Note: If you do not use cranberries, cut sugar by 1/4. Bake in TWO loaf pans, grease and flour.

Note: Use fresh cranberries, not jell.

Marty : Gee, I can't make up my mind whether I should ask Kate or Edith to be my wife.
Smarty: Well, you can't have your Kate and Edith, too!

RAY RAYNER asks.... When rain falls, does it ever get up again?
Answer -- ... Oh, yes --- in dew time.

A little kindness from person to person is better than a vast love for all humankind.

* * * *

"FOURTH ANNUAL BLACK ATHLETES HALL OF FAME AWARDS"

ON WGN TELEVISION JULY 28

White Sox Manager Larry Doby Is One of Eight Inductees

The "Fourth Annual Presentation of the Black Athletes Hall of Fame Awards," hosted by Bill Cosby, will be aired at 7:30 p.m., Friday, July 28 on WGN Television 9.

The 90-minute special boasts an impressive roster of guest stars and entertainers, including: Alan King, Howard Cosell, Natalie Cole, Al Green, Lou Rawls, Milton Berle, Dick Gregory, Richie Haven, George Plimpton, Billy Paul, Chuck Mangione, Franco Harris, Earl Monroe, George Benson, Miss Universe, Lady Flash, Wilma Rudolph, Bill Bradley and Jackie and Randy Jackson. Preceding each inductee's award, there will be film clips of their achievements.

Chicago White Sox Manager Larry Doby will be one of the eight inductees honored; the others are superstars Wilt Chamberlain and O. J. Simpson; Dick "Nightrain" Lane, the Detroit Lions star and All-Pro for three straight years; Nell C. Jackson, a leader in the fight for both blacks and women in sports and the first Black woman on the Board of Directors of the U. S. Olympic Committee; Wendell Scott, the first Black professional race car driver; Edward Stanley Temple, Head Coach for the USA Track and Field team for past Olympics; Ike Williams, Boxing's World Lightweight Champion from 1947-51.

The Black Athletes Hall of Fame was founded in 1974 by Olympian Charles Mays.

Register-Star

Sunday

July 9, 1978

MAGAZINE



Wally Phillips: WGN's morning star

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Phillips talks while Fred Keller, right, gets a record ready

Wally is king of morning radio

By DAVE ZIMMERMAN

CHICAGO — At dawn and through that mad time of flying cereal, Wally Phillips is there.

Then the grand master of conversation, relevant information and diversion literally guides his radio audience through rush-hour horrors and offers them a hand up during the mid-morning slump.

Then he is gone, leaving loyal listeners feeling a little more content and cared about, perhaps even smarter (if knowing how to say "banana nose" in Afganistan is an indication of intelligence).

Wally Phillips has been king of morning radio here since he deposed Howard Miller more than 10 years ago. The most recent Arbitron ratings indicate his 5:30 to 10 a.m. show on WGN has more listeners than the three runner-up stations combined.

His success formula is simple: Give

the listeners what they like. In radio, a medium in which "format" usually is rammed down listeners throats (or ears) and false enthusiasm links the Top 40, Phillips' airwaves seem always fresh.

Who else knows practically every street repair site to be avoided in the city and has half of Chicago ready to fill him in if he forgets one? Who would call a resort in Ipanema and ask for that girl in the song who is "tall and tan and young and lovely" and walks on the beach each day? Or spend considerable air time giving very explicit directions to Wrigley Field to a nervous mother about to take her nine-year-old son to his first pro baseball game?

Such random delights and bits of help in getting through the day are what make Wally Phillips Wally Phillips.

He rises each morning at 3:30 at his

Winnetka home and drives down the Edens and Kennedy to a small restaurant that has fresh orange juice.

He arrives at the station so bright-eyed and alert that he is an affront to those less able to rise and shine at an unholy hour.

The studio bookshelves cannot hold the resource materials that enable him to locate nearly any fact within the universe. People call Wally when they want to know the number of hairs on their heads or the weather conditions at Uncle Ferd's cabin near the Okefenokee Swamp.

If Wally doesn't know the answer, someone out there in "the big family" does. Phillips' show brings people together, and, in a city whose inhabitants generally communicate with shrugs, that is something.

Although Phillips will turn over his air time to breaking news of major consequence, he perceives morning

as a time for palatable material.

"The last thing people want in the morning is controversy," he says. "It's enough of a fight for people to get up and get going. I never calculatedly introduce controversy. It's not that I want to avoid it; I just don't get involved in it."

He keeps in tune with his listeners by imagining what they are doing, just as though he's actually with them from the time they wake up until 10 a.m.

The first hour or so is fairly low-key — weather and news are emphasized. The 7 to 8 p.m. period is "family time," a tough period when Phillips offers some diversion, perhaps a mind-teasing Ellery Queen Mystery that might unite a harried family. From 8 to 9 p.m. he sees the mother sighing with relief at the last door slam and the husband driving to work and needing traffic flow reports.

The final hour is loose, full of whimsy, interesting items and longer conversations.

The callers are of every description. On this particular day, the monotone voice of a young man informs Phillips that he has not slept for two days and wants to know the record for staying awake. In seconds,



Wally Phillips at work: signalling, phoning, talking, thinking

On the cover

Wally Phillips delivers some instructions to his crew during his top-rated morning show on WGN radio.

Photos by
Jim Quinn

Phillips lets his callers be the stars

Phillips has the answer (288 hours). He is kind in a situation in which most talk show hosts would get their kicks out of making the caller seem a weirdo. He finds out if the youth is taking anything to stay awake and learns it's orange juice.

With a matter-of-fact explanation of what symptoms the caller might experience, he asks the caller to check in later.

Phillips only gets into put-downs or one-upmanship with those who can dish it out.

"Listen," he says to one caller who's putting him on, "What size trunk you wear? I have a couple of friends in River Forest who can be there in a couple of hours."

Or later, after partying with another caller, he says "You're no day at the beach either, fella," and hangs up.

The hundreds of calls received each morning are winnowed by the show's producer, Marilyn Miller, whom Phillips describes as "indispensable."

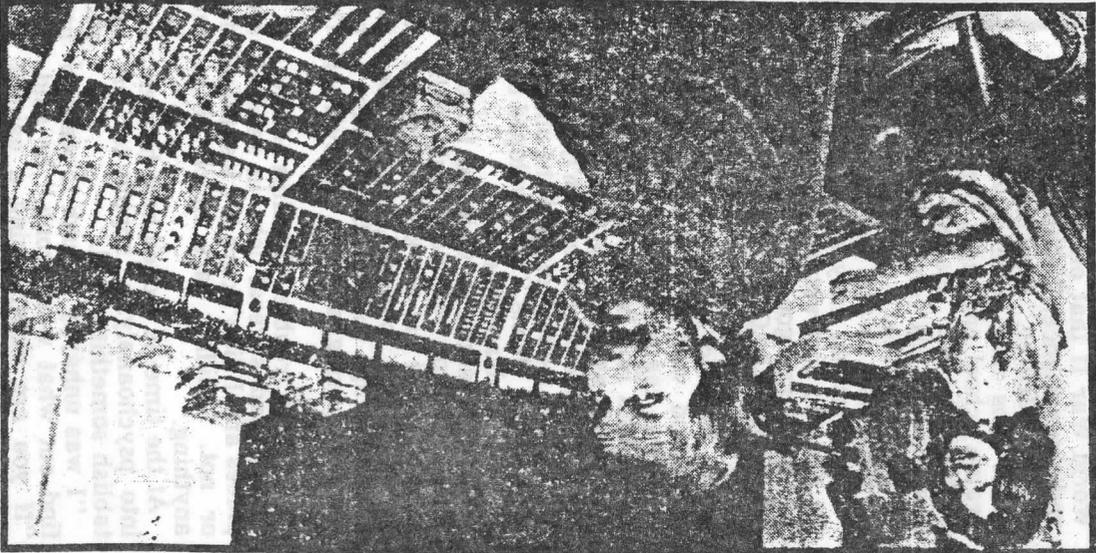
Miller said she attempts to narrow the calls to those that are interesting and convey questions and information that might be on other listeners' minds. The real crackpots, those threatening suicide, etc., often are given other numbers to call for help.

Phillips is advised of a pre-selected call by a messenger Miller relays via a closed-circuit TV monitor. It includes the person's name, briefly describes his subject and usually a comment on his verbal skills and wit. "Extra sharp..." "Not very sharp..." etc.

Sometimes the tone of the next call is communicated by a "happy face" or sad one held up by Miller.

Thus Phillips immediately can begin a conversation with "Hello, Madel. You sound ansly today." Before a commercial and the engineers delight in dubbing in a woman panting and screened. Phillips can allow them to take the show and run with it. They become the "stars" of the program, and Phillips is the matchmaker who allows them to touch and know one another.

Phillips' listeners are especially entertained by the show's use of "wild interruption and one two-minute comfort break." What music there usually is keyed to a news item or a



Producer Marilyn Miller and engineer Skip Brezmski on duty in control room.

card" voices that are slipped in without warning by the engineers in the control booth. One of the host's favorites is what he calls the "sissy mad at me?"

Others are of known entertainers taken from recordings or other public figures who have come to know Wally and supply him with choice bits when they're in Chicago.

Phillips, "breaks in an hysterical Ann Alera." But you don't know anything about suffering and pain. . . You want to know something Wally Phillips? You're not gonna make it!"

Don Rickles occasionally informs listeners that Phillips is "a boring guy" and Mickey Rooney, Foster Brooks and Broderick Crawford are other favorites. Tonto might be heard saying "Me see" in the middle of a commercial and the engineers delight in dubbing in a woman panting and giggling over the music.

The music Phillips plays never is a crutch or time-filler. Sometimes it is absent and Phillips says through his 4½-hour show with nary a musical interruption and one two-minute

specific date, such as a composer's wedding day and offering him a free ticket to that day's game. The guy was heard by a million listeners actually sounding torn between the two events. Phillips said the new law, or Neil Diamond.

An FCC ruling has somewhat cramped Phillips' style. There was a time he pulled such hilarious pranks as calling a fanatical Cubs fan on his



Other stations keep trying but can't beat his ratings

Continued from Page 4

put on the air, was made because other radio personalities "abused" their freedom.

Phillips was raised in southeast Ohio, an area that he says is "the most accent-free place in the country." At one point he planned to be a Passionist monk, but that lifestyle lost its appeal after he spent three years in a preparatory seminary.

After a stint in the military during World War II that offered him some radio experience, Phillips said he became a "drifter," working at a variety of jobs and eventually attended drama school one night per week in Cincinnati. His teacher was impressed with his voice and his ability to communicate.

"But I had no zeal for it," he said. "It was just an easy thing for me to do. She (his instructor) sent out audition tapes and got me a job."

He worked in Grand Rapids, Mich., and then returned to Cincinnati, where he held a number of jobs in radio and was fired from one. He later was teamed on radio and television with Bob Bell, who now also is with WGN as Bozo the Clown. Along the way, uncomfortable with the traditional disc jockey role and the chores of standard "hosts," he developed his low-key madcap style.

When he came to Chicago to join WGN, Phillips remained only half-serious about his work. A television variety show bombed, mostly because Chicago was not the place for a show requiring a daily turnover of celebrities.

"I was in trouble," Phillips admits. "I had had several jobs in several places and I didn't care if I lost them or not. I didn't care much about anything."

At the time he moved here he went into psychoanalysis, hoping to "establish something real."

"I was unhappy enough to want to find out what was wrong," he said. "If you are experiencing a painful way of living you won't alter it unless you can get to the origin of it."

"There was nothing magical about it. There was no exact date on the calendar when I got better, but I did."

With this help, he dug in and worked his way up to the morning slot. He is a constant advocate of openness and honest relationships. Divorced for the second time from his former wife, he has talked of his marital problems on the air.



Phillips smiles at a humorous call during his show

"There are impediments that are ingrained in so many of us," he said. "Some of it comes from the 'be seen and not heard' syndrome that kids are raised with. They're not allowed to be themselves, not allowed to be involved in discussions at the dinner table. Why should people grow up to be nervous and afraid of one another? There's no reason for it."

Staffers say that it is Phillips' sense of caring and humanity that allows him to stay on top and withstand the numerous assaults that have been launched by rival stations. Those who have attempted to imitate him and tried entirely "new" approaches have come and gone. A recent campaign was publicly announced as sure to outdo Phillips. Cartoon advertisements pictured WAIT's Bob Del Giorno about to clamber to the top of a mountain with Phillips up there stamping on his fingers.

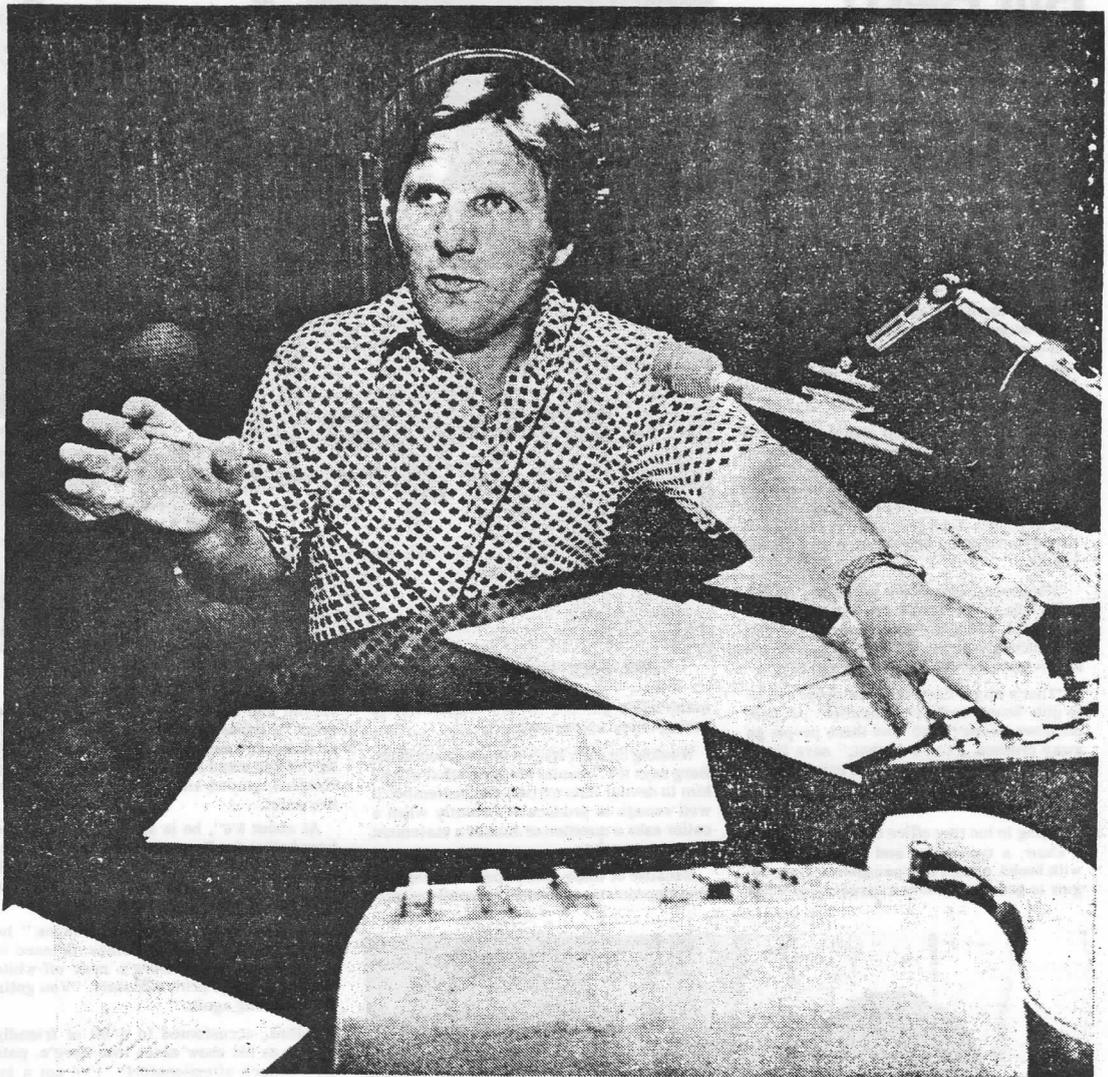
It angered both Phillips and his staff.

What else makes the seemingly even-tempered Phillips angry?

"The Ayn Rand types, the 'get out of my way people.' The kind of guy who leaves here and dumps his ashtray in the parking lot. The fakers, the people who don't care."

Phillips lets his callers be the stars

Pick a topic, any topic and Bill Berg will have an opinion on it that he is more than willing to express as he argues, cajoles and tries to make his listeners think on his afternoon WGN talk show



Bill Berg — a talk show purist

by Pam Bigford Thomas

Four small buttons flash on Bill Berg's phone, reminding him that four callers are patiently waiting for his ear.

One guy wants to talk about the shooting of CTA drivers, and ironically, the next caller is a young black CTA driver who wants to argue against capital punishment. An irate White Sox fan is waiting to gripe about a sports column, while a proud but kooky dad wants to talk about unusual Father's Day gifts.

Berg holds up three fingers to producer John Madormo, who is commanding the phones in a small glass booth, punches line number three and launches into a heavy but fascinating discussion with the CTA driver on whether capital punishment gets to the root of crime.

So goes another show for WGN's Bill Berg, Chicago's number one radio man in the afternoon drive slot. Threading his way through a jumble of traffic reports, news

spots and endless commercials, Berg talks to and with Chicago's people. He kids them, argues with them, makes them laugh, and, he hopes, makes them think.

Berg, who calls himself a 25-cent psychiatrist, is a talk show purist. No authors, trivia quizzes or experts prop him up. Just you, me and Bill talking on the air about whatever strikes our fancy.

But not having that guest to rely on to provide a theme and answer questions makes Berg's job that much harder. He has to be ready to talk about literally anything.

"When you throw open the phone lines, people want to talk about baseball, how to curb violence on the CTA; whether Proposition 13 is applicable in Illinois; how they feel about the Panama Canal. It behooves me to have done research to engage in meaningful conversation with these people. I owe it to my audience."

Accordingly, Berg says "I read my eyes

red." He has 70 files that he describes as "bulging" with information his listeners send in and tidbits he picks up.

His regular diet besides "whatever I can get my hands on," is Time, Newsweek, People, St. Louis Sporting News, the New York Times, U.S. News and World Report, and the National Enquirer. He likes to read at home in suburban Chicago, preferably late at night while his wife is engrossed in a novel, and he can concentrate, underline and sleep on it.

"A lot of it is anticipation, anticipating the half dozen things that will be most on people's minds. I get up in the morning, read the newspapers, listen to two or three newscasts. You develop a sixth sense. You say, is that the kind of thing people will pick up? After seven years of this, I have a fairly good idea. But it keeps it fresh to be wrong."

Berg's method of operation is to find out exactly what the facts are on a potentially "hot" topic. "People hear what they want to

hear. They take things out of context. So I have to be darned sure of what was said or done.

Berg's zeal for basing his show on facts underscores his deep concern about the radio talk show format, which he says has been "more harmful than helpful" in the past.

Outlandish accusations, he says, go unchallenged by talk show hosts. He warns his own callers not to do irreparable damage to a person or company by hurling accusations by name. However well-intentioned they may be, "It's only half a story."

As a case in point, Berg remembers recently twisting his radio dial to a talk show where the guest was poet Rod McKuen. McKuen was talking about Anita Bryant's campaign against gay rights.

"Anita Bryant apparently believes in what she's doing," Berg said. "If Rod McKuen or anyone else wants to say he disagrees with her, fine, but he made some of the most in-

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Bill Berg:

(Continued from page 3)

credible statements. He said she was trying to get people who agree with her to shoot homosexuals. That went right by (the host)."

Berg does his best not to let irrational or angry callers run away with his show. Favorite Berg phrases are, "Isn't that a bit simplistic?" and "I think there's a couple of things you haven't considered," whereupon Berg lays out his opinion on an issue — and he has one on everything.

"If you imply that callers are dopes, they'll get hostile, and understandably so. But if you are firm but civil, most people will respond to that approach. But sometimes you have to say, 'If you want to talk it out, then stay on the line, but otherwise I'll hang up.'"

Berg also is concerned about a paranoia he detects in today's society, an overwhelming Watergate mentality that sees a "Big Brother" government coverup in everything from UFOs to the Kennedy-King murders to the Bermuda Triangle, and he feels compelled to hunt up information that is accurate.

"People feel very close to the guy on the radio," he said. "That's why we have to be so careful. There are some people who feel very strongly about the person on the air and live and die with everything you say.

"That's why it's wrong to use people, to be so glib. Some (radio personalities) put people down on the phone, and those people go away crushed. I can't do that," says Berg, who consistently takes pains to listen and respond to even the most rambling and confusing kind of caller.

Sitting in his tiny office cubicle that holds a chair, a typewriter and a desk littered with books, papers and pamphlets, Berg begins to gather up the newspapers and other



Bill Berg and wife, Charlene, frequently jog for a physical release from the job's daily tensions

material he guesses callers might refer to during today's program.

Winding through WGN's maze of corridors, Berg says it's "mental training" that allows him to devour information and remember it well enough to produce it instantly when a caller asks a question or makes a statement he wants to refute.

Because of those hours spent reading and the concentration required to handle contro-

versial and sensitive topics, Berg says he needs "a release, which is anything physical, in order to keep from going crazy." That day he had biked 11 miles with one of his five children, played an hour of tennis and ran two miles.

At about 5'6", he is stocky but solid. No beer bellies for Berg, not like the one he immediately needles radio personality Bob Collins about as he steps in the door of the orange and brown studio.

"I'd say they're going to be twins," he teases the tall, bearded Collins, dressed in jeans compared to Berg's neat off-white pants and beige print silk shirt. "You gotta start running again."

Collins, accustomed to a bit of friendly banter as his show eases into Berg's, pats his stomach affectionately. "I've got a lot invested in this," he says.

Left alone, Berg tells his listeners about a nationwide survey citing inflation as this country's number one problem. Only three percent said it was crime, and he believes more people are worried about crime than that.

So the whirlwind of calls begins. Within minutes a man is on the phone saying crime goes hand-in-hand with inflation, because most crime is related to economic frustration. Berg's suggested topic, however, turns out to be a dud. The second caller brings up today's hot issue, the weekend shooting of a CTA driver allegedly by a man on work-release from prison. "These guys are really getting sloppy about letting those dummies on the street," the caller finishes.

Still in the first 15 minutes of the show, an angry White Sox fan introduces the day's third topic, charging that Chicago Tribune columnist David Israel's latest column "is a deliberate rip of the White Sox and fans."

Berg has read the column, but reaches for the paper to refresh his memory.

"This is the Tribune flaunting its power, showing it won't back down to White Sox Owner Bill Veeck," the caller continues.

Berg hears a ring of paranoia. "Why must you assume this is policy set down by the Tribune as opposed to the opinion of one writer?" he asks.

The caller says it's too coincidental, and when the Sox are doing well they deserve a

pat on the back. Berg emphasizes "It's rash to jump to the conclusion it's management."

Now the caller does what many people do: asks Berg for his personal opinion. A self-made know-it-all from his voluminous reading and frequent discussion of a variety of issues, people can count on Berg to say what he thinks. Most are aware of his views on controversial topics, and call to try to change his mind.

As Berg pauses to think about this one, the caller says Veeck was not out for publicity when he made his charges of slanted coverage of the White Sox by the Chicago Tribune. Bill Wilson, a WGN public relations man, doubles over in silent laughter.

Deciding it's time to set the facts straight, Berg says forcefully, "Veeck was proved to be dead wrong." A bit more back and forth, and the call is over.

Lots of people, Berg says, call him about sports because he does occasional Cubs games, did the Bears play-by-play sometimes and used to do a sports talk show on WIND before coming to WGN. "Sports is my first love," he admits. "Eventually I want to do the Cubs."

Berg glances at a small TV-type monitor to his right where his producer, who talks to the callers before they get to Berg ("to make sure they're not drunk or anything"), sends him short summaries of what each caller wants to talk about.

Berg picks Father's Day gifts, and a middle-aged man tells him he got this year's most unusual Father's Day gift: goose quill toothpicks. Did Berg get anything unusual?

Grinning but determined to discuss this somewhat seriously, Berg lists a shirt, a jogging outfit, a pedometer and a horseshoe game. They discuss how thick quilts are and whether they can go between teeth, then the caller makes it clear he's more interested in fun topics than sports or social matters.

"I'd rather talk about pineapple upside down cake (another gift) than all this glib stuff," he says, and hangs up.

The next caller, a young black CTA driver, hopes to alter Berg's views on capital punishment, which Berg supports. The caller contends it may stop an occasional murder, but it doesn't solve the problem behind the crime.

Berg, however, says stopping a murder



Bill Berg and producer John Madormo sort through day's news



Bill Berg sorts through files filled with tidbits that he may need

means that person will not be incarcerated, "and may meet someone who can help them take less than the bitter attitude they have in life."

The man continues in a soft, concerned voice: There's a need not just for an eye for an eye, "but to go in and see why these people are doing these things."

Berg concedes that is definitely ideal. "But what do we do tonight for the people who have to get on the L-train, go shopping or walk in the park? Don't you think we ought to say to those people who would prey on them, you're going to catch your lunch, so to speak?"

"There are so many things socially wrong," the caller says, like no jobs and poor schooling. He says people are running from the city because of crime, but they may be taking the solutions with them.

The call goes on a little longer, with Berg criticizing the National Assn. for the Advancement of Colored People for fighting capital punishment "because they are inadvertently doing a disservice to the people they are trying to protect," like the black CTA driver killed this weekend. Good point, says the CTA driver on the other end of the phone.

"See," says Berg, hanging up, "we get silly as hell with goose quills and then we get heavy."

Berg liked that lengthy phone call. "I'd rather go for quality than quantity. I'd sooner talk with a guy like that, a black guy concerned with his people, a CTA driver, than get three frivolous nothing calls for three minutes apiece."

Berg weaves in news, a traffic report and a call from a woman upset over conditions in Cook County Jail.

He straightens out some confusion over whether the Cubs will be on TV tonight, answers a call from a woman who wants to vote bad judges out of office, and listens to a woman upset about a newspaper column derisive of the South.

It's almost 6 p.m. and Berg is fighting to get the news on the air. Finally the woman hangs up. "We're late again," he says. "That's the toughest part, even when they're intelligent trying to get them off the phone."

The frequent commercials are sometimes an irritation. "You're dealing with real tragedies. Cancer, a loved one killed in a crime. Then you have to come right out of that and sell lawnmowers."

Floyd Brown, sports broadcaster, sits down next to Berg and they discuss why the Cubs are so slow running to first base. "They should tell them to treat first base like a Playboy Bunny — run to it and hug it," Berg suggests.

Right before a commercial, Brown asks him if he heard Harry Caray "really giving it to the weathermen" for saying it would rain Saturday, which Caray said cost the Sox attendance on a rainless day.

Off the air, Berg makes a clean but uncomplimentary remark about Caray. He and Brown speculate whether Harry is on a percentage basis with the crowds because he was so vehement about the weathermen.

Brown sticks it to Berg as soon as they're back on the air. "What did you say about Harry?" he asks, grinning wickedly. Unflustered, Berg goes into the good job the Chicago weathermen are doing.

Somebody pops in to tell Berg that Lou Boudreau, color man for the Cubs, pulled a real radio blooper after last night's game. Berg immediately wants to play it.

Soon we hear Boudreau, in the locker room, reading a commercial on the sparkling clean, pure qualities of Mountain Valley Water. Just as he reaches the end and says, "You'll like Mountain Valley Water — it's good for you," the airwaves are flooded with the incredibly loud flushing of a toilet. Boudreau's voice quivers, then breaks up. As Berg and Brown come back on the air, all listeners can hear is uncontrolled cackling.

"That couldn't have happened during a commercial for an airline," says Berg, wiping his eyes.

Producer Madormo tells him there's no time for more calls. The Cubs are starting early. Berg finishes up with a traffic report, an intro for the Cubs game, and the familiar "G'night everybody." Picking up the material he will read tonight, Berg makes his way to the parking lot. "It's the total unpredictability of this job that keeps me coming back," he says. "We've got the hurting, the silliness, the blooper."

Berg, 41, got his plum job through persistence. He stayed in Midwest radio in Lafayette, Springfield, Detroit, Milwaukee, always aiming for the big Chicago job. Time and again, he auditioned, sent tapes and got rejected.

His big break was a WIND music and sports talk show, and in 1971 a fan in WGN management brought him to the afternoon general talk show. At that time, he says, management was worried about his being too identified with sports to handle such a free-wheeling show.

Now he's trying to convince the same management that listeners will accept him at both levels at the same time, because his ultimate aim is to be "the Voice of the Cubs."

But business is business, and the WGN big-wigs don't like to tamper with a good thing, especially when, according to the ratings, Berg is the best thing going between 4 and 7 p.m.

But after seven years on the drive shift, Berg is aware of his success and openly ambitious about his future. His restlessness is frank: "I'm very grateful for that success, but I want to do more with my life than this show. Play-by-play is traveling. I observe everything, especially people's attitudes. I'd like to see the rest of the country as it's changing, and I could do a better talk show in the fall and winter. I'd like to freshen up my own existence by doing more than one thing."

On that note, the man with the seven-year-itch hopped into the family station wagon and drove off toward another night's reading, another batch of shows, and a future that may someday include a new tone in the "Voice of the Cubs."

What Wendy wants

Music / Valerie Scher

"I WANT TO be the greatest mezzo-soprano in the world. My dream is to sing at the Metropolitan Opera. And I believe that if you really want to do something, you shouldn't put limits on yourself. You've always got to strive to be the very best."

When Wendy White talks, you believe her. The 25-year-old opera singer radiates more vitality than Debbie Boone and has the disarming self-confidence of a true believer in the power of positive thinking. Bright, unabashedly opinionated and cheerfully ambitious, White has a mental outlook as healthy as her freckled complexion.

EARLIER, SHE apologized for her lateness. The fuses had blown out in her home in south suburban Harvey ("My blow dryer wouldn't work so I had to run outside and dry my hair in the sun") and then she got stuck in a Loop traffic jam. That's enough to frazzle most people yet White looked cool and collected in her fashionable summer suit with her reddish hair neatly pulled back in a French twist.

She came into Chicago to chat about, among other things, her Grant Park debut Wednesday and Friday when she'll sing arias from Donizetti's "La Favorita," Saint-Saens' "Samson et Delila," and Canteloube's "Songs of the Auvergne."

The concert dates resulted from White's winning the WGN-Illinois Opera Guild Auditions of the Air, a national contest. Beside the Grant Park appearances, she was awarded \$4,000 in scholarship money, which White said will come in handy when she moves to New York this fall and begins her studies with Daniel Ferro.

"One of the biggest problems is financing an operatic career," she lamented. "It requires the kind of money most young singers don't have. So these competitions open the door for you."

ANOTHER IMPORTANT DOOR opened for White this spring when she was named co-winner (with Winifred Brown) of the Metropolitan Opera auditions. But contests and auditions can



also be ego-mashers, as White readily admits.

"Usually you feel like a piece of meat being paraded around the stage. The judges just sit there. It's terribly dehumanizing. Then after you've sung, you go back to your dressing room and think about how much better you could have done. It's awful. I hate auditions more than anything."

White may hate them, but she enters them because she's one of the new breed of young American opera singers bent on making it in this country rather than spending years in Europe, slowly building a reputation by traipsing from one little opera house to another.

SHE WON the WGN-Illinois Opera Guild contest on her second try. Her first shot at it, in 1977, was less than spectacular.

"The weather was so cold that my car broke down on the way to the audition," she recalled with a grin-and-bear-it expression. "I finally made it, but in the middle of my second aria I knew I was singing poorly so I stopped. The next year, I had to prove that I could do it."

White states matter-of-factly that she always knew she could sing. After all, at the age of 3 she was warbling gospel music in church. As a teen-ager she adored jazz, pop music and show tunes.

But it wasn't until she was a music education major at Wheaton College that she was "discovered" during an audition by the music dean, Harold Best. He told her she was "out of her mind" to want to be a music teacher when she could be a performer. White said she took Best

Wendy White, a young mezzo-soprano who radiates more vitality than Debbie Boone, dreams of singing at the Metropolitan Opera. (Sun-Times Photo by Kevin Horan)

up on his suggestion because "I've always been one for a challenge."

AFTER WHEATON, White was a graduate student at Indiana University where she starred in university productions like Bizet's "Carmen." And before completing her master of music degree in May, she sandwiched in solo appearances with orchestras as well as performances in Yugoslavia, Austria and Israel.

What now? "There are a lot of young singers who have the voice for a big career, but they're not prepared emotionally for it. You've got to know what you're ready for."

For friendly advice on how to choreograph her crucial career moves, White relies on her family and IU faculty members Eileen Farrell and Walter Cassel. When asked how she feels about the career vs. marriage-and-family dilemma, her gray-green eyes flashed with conviction.

"Singing can't be your whole life," she said firmly. "It's very lonely after the curtain goes down and you go home to an apartment by yourself. I want to find a man who understands what my career involves."

Valerie Scher, a doctoral student in music history at Northwestern University, has reviewed concerts for The Sun-Times.

Judges weren't wrong—she's a true lyric mezzo

Tribune --July 27, 1978

Tempo Music

By John Von Rhein

Music critic

IT IS NOT EVERY young singer who can win first prize the same year in two major national opera competitions, but Wendy White is no ordinary singer. Earlier this year the Chicago-born mezzo-soprano took first place in the annual WGN-Illinois Opera Guild national auditions, then went on to share top honors with another Chicago-based singer, Winifred Brown, in the Metropolitan Opera auditions. Miss White collected on part of her winnings Wednesday night by making her Grant Park Symphony debut at the Petrillo music shell.

To judge by the quality of the two 19th Century arias she performed, the judges knew talent and professional potential when they heard it. Miss White has all the natural gifts and stage presence needed to establish her firmly on an upward professional path. She is a true lyric mezzo, the mistress of a peaches-and-cream voice one could listen to all night, evenly produced throughout its range. Its sweetness is consistent at whatever dynamic level, and its smooth legato and clear tonal focus suggest that Dorabella and Cherubino reside just around her corner. She obviously cares about the meaning of words, and she knows how to color the sound appropriately. With the proper guidance, there should be no stopping Wendy White.

HER CHOICE OF selections was hardly surprising, there being relatively few lyric showpieces in the mezzo literature, but it made up in attractiveness what it lacked in duration or depth.

There was a touch of nervousness at the beginning of Leonora's aria "O mio Fernando," from Donizetti's "La Favorita," but it soon vanished, and Miss White summoned lustrous low notes as easily as she commanded a secure top. A particularly slow tempo for "Mon coeur s'ouvre a ta voix," from Saint-Saens' "Samson et Dalila," enabled her to sustain some long, beautifully seductive phrases. She also offered five of Joseph Canteloube's arrangements of songs of the Auvergne, those delicious little folk vignettes from a province in central France. She brought out their simple pastoral charm so well that one wished for a more generous selection.

THE ORCHESTRA UNDER David Zinman accompanied her shakily, particularly at the beginning, but its major responsibilities of the evening were Schubert's "Unfinished" Symphony and Grieg's "Norwegian Dances." The conductor skimmed blandly over the surface of the "Unfinished," unmoved by the deep vein of tragic lyricism that resides in the great slow movement. The Grieg pieces, too lightweight for the average symphonic program, perhaps, but just right in this context, brought the evening to a lively, rhythmically infectious close. The program will be repeated at 8 p.m. Friday.

As usual, the Grant Park program leaflet told us not a word about the performers, but its most heinous crime was its omission of texts and translations for the vocal works. Doesn't anyone over in the Park District office give a damn about common audience-performer courtesy?

Mass Media Coverage Reaches All Time High With Valuable Cancer Information

The subject of Cancer is probably the most covered of all medical subjects today. The science reporters of the Chicago dailies and science reporters of radio and TV stations have given huge exposure this year to new discoveries and advances.

In one instance, on WBBM-TV, reporter Frank Field introduced a new Hemocult Screening Kit with 30,000 test kits requested from the American Cancer Society within a few days. Numerous talk shows conducted interviews with cancer experts.

The Chicago Unit Public Information volunteers, led by Donald Petkus, Commonwealth Edison Company, are keeping the public well informed on the activities of the Cancer Society. Russell Van Cleve, Harshe-Rotman & Druck, covered the

important area of Crusade Public Information.

Jack Taylor, WGN-TV News, honored the communicators with special recognition certificates at a recent luncheon. Recipients included: Jane Torri, Harshe-Rotman & Druck; Ellen Ryan; Susan Garrett; Mary Sworsky, Standard Federal Savings; Joan Wynne, Beverly Bank; Elynore Meserow; Mrs. Earl Wagner; Wayne Gregory, National Safety Council; and Richard Biehl, Chicago Tribune.



Jack Taylor, WGN-TV News, honored the communicators and gave a special recognition certificate to among others Joan Wynne, Beverly Bank, shown here (photo second from left) with Merri Dee and Donald Petkus.

Chicago Unit Elects Officers



At the recent annual meeting the following officers were elected for 1978-79. They are (second from left) Dr. Janet Wolter, President elect; (photo left to right) Paul Gerding, Chairman of the Board; Merri Dee, Secretary; Dr. James V. Apostol, immediate past President; Dr. Wolter and Dr. Francis Straus, II, Vice President elect. Not shown are Arthur E. Osborne, Vice Chairman elect; Mrs. Jenny Kinsella, Vice President and Chairman of the Women's Board; and James Ryan, Treasurer.



The Women's Board recently benefited from the opening night at Dr. Shen's, an exotic new restaurant located in Newberry Plaza.

Dr. and Mrs. Phil Shen were thanked by Unit Board Member Merri Dee of WGN-TV and Mrs. Homer Livingston Jr., 1978 Women's Board Crusade Chairman.

The Board also celebrated the Wind-Up of the \$10,000 1978 Weight-A-Thon with Mrs. Benjamin Scott, Chairman of this special event.

North Suburban Newsletter --- June 1977

MERRI DEE (WGN Radio/TV Personality) participated in the United States Post Office's (North Suburban) workshop on "Career Strategies in Upward Mobility," which stressed assertiveness training to apprise women of the changes they have to make in order to advance in this man's world.

Merri began her presentation by giving a little of her background -- her tragic experience of being kidnapped and left for dead with four bullet wounds in her head--and the survival techniques she has used to enable her to keep on pushing. Ms. Dee's motto is "Do what you've got to do because of you (because you care about yourself); not because someone else wants you to do it."

"Essential elements of success for women," said Ms. Dee, "are self-confidence, self-awareness and motivation."

People's forum

With gratitude to Little League

Editor, The Post-Crescent:

I was pleased to see Mr. Natrop named as administrator of the Little League District Area 2 which covers all of Northeastern Wisconsin. The young men who play in the Einstein Division of the Appleton Little League have been very fortunate to have this gentleman and his charming wife at the controls. Mr. Natrop is responsible for the score board, the bat racks, the publicity, the free treats for a good play or hit, plus many, many more things. In the last few remaining games of this season it would be nice if the boys, their parents, and fans acknowledged this devotion by thanking Mr. Natrop and his wife when they could out at the ball games. I believe the following would be appreciated by Mr. Natrop, coaches, managers, and parents who have been involved in the Little League program.

Recently while driving to another city I happened to be listening to WGN-Radio from Chicago and heard a story titled "LITTLE LEAGUERS" by Robert Prestegaard, as read by Clif Mercer on "Music Unlimited."

Mr. Prestegaard informs me this is a true story. A friend of his at the radio station had coached a Little League team in Chicago, and this gave Mr. Prestegaard the idea for this story.

"The time of the year has come again — when little guys become big guys — vacant lots become big-time baseball diamonds — and the cry of "Play Ball" is heard throughout the neighborhood. The World of the Little Leaguers. And it's quite a world. Any dad will tell you.

So will any mother. So will the coach. And it's the coach of one northside neighborhood Little League club here in Chicago, who pretty well sums it all up. He recalls the team he coached last year. Ages 8 to 12. Everybody batted. Everybody played. Everybody had heart. Had to have heart. The coach had a pitcher who couldn't throw. A catcher who couldn't catch. A first baseman who could throw, but not catch. A second baseman who couldn't stop a grounder. A shortstop who couldn't get anything into the air. And a third baseman who kept looking through his legs to see ground balls zoom by. Also, the coach had: One outfielder who couldn't run. Another outfielder who couldn't catch. And a third outfielder who was playing just because his dad wanted him to play. All the mothers and fathers came to every game to see how well the coach was doing and how their sons were improving. If it had been left to the dads, this would have been fact: The team would have had 9 pitchers and they all would have batted third. But the summer went along. With heart. With a lot of guts and a win of 8 games out of 20. Not bad. The kids gave it everything they had. They sweated and they played it out. And the coach, at the end of the season, he had only one thing to say. He wouldn't have traded that Little League ball club of his for the Brooklyn Dodgers in their prime. Little Leaguers, Play Ball!"

Donald L. Roth
Appleton

Once headed WGN Radio

Frank Schreiber, 76, is buried

FRANK P. SCHREIBER, 76, who had a varied career as newspaperman, radio and television executive, banker, and restaurant operator, was entombed Monday in the Abbey of Oakridge Cemetery in Hillside.

He died Saturday in Westlake Community Hospital, Melrose Park.

Schreiber was born in Chicago on Dec. 3, 1901, the son of Frank P. and Hattie Schreiber.

He attended public schools in Chicago and Oak Park, working as a high school correspondent for The Tribune before graduation from Oak Park High School.

Schreiber was a sports writer for The Tribune from 1919 to 1924, assistant sports editor from 1924 to 1929, and as-

sistant purchasing agent from 1929 to 1931.

HE BECAME public relations director of Tribune-owned radio station WGN in 1931 and was named general manager in 1940. In 1948 he directed the establishment of WGN-TV. At his resignation in 1956, he was vice president and general manager of WGN, Inc.

Since 1958 he had owned Otto's restaurant, 7212 Washington Blvd., Forest Park.

He became a director of Forest Park National Bank in 1961 and was board chairman since 1965.

SCHREIBER was the first president and managing director of the Moline Television Corp., operator of WQAD-TV [Channel 8] in Moline.

After the station received its construction permit from the Federal Communications Commission in 1961, he supervised construction and preparations for telecasting, which began in August, 1963.

He resigned as president and managing director in June, 1965, to devote full time to the restaurant and the bank but remained on the television company board of directors.

Schreiber lived at 215 Marengo Av., Forest Park. His wife, Ann, survives. A brother, Edward, City Hall reporter for The Tribune, died in 1975. Another brother, George, who had retired as a reporter and editor at The Tribune, died in 1966.



Frank Schreiber in 1956

**PHIL DONAHUE:
"LET'S SAY
WE'RE GETTING
ALONG
VERY WELL"**



**MARLO THOMAS:
"MY LIFE
GETS BETTER
ALL
THE TIME"**

A revealing look at the busy, successful lives of a pair of long-distance lovers who will talk about almost everything but each other

BY MARY ANN O'ROARK

Donahue. He hurries out of the wings and into the audience like a ringmaster entering the center ring. He's pulling on his suit jacket as he walks—he's just changed from the dungarees he wears to work—and even at 11 in the morning his Irish charm is buffed to perfection. The audience lights up as though a switch has been thrown. "It's him," a woman says excitedly as she sights him. "It's him." Like most of the audience, she has waited over a year to be here.

Donahue moves quickly and cordially through the audience, shaking hands, patting shoulders, making friendly small talk, working the crowd like an Irish politician. "Anybody here a Catholic?" he says. He taps his microphone against the air as though dispensing holy water. "Fifteen seconds, Phil," the assistant director calls out. The studio lights are hot as sun, the atmosphere is charged, yet cozy. The show's theme music begins to play in the background, scenes of Chicago flash by on the monitor. "Stand by," the assistant director calls. A ruby light winks on, the camera becomes a living, watching eye. Another hour with Phil Donahue begins.

Phil Donahue is a sturdy, silver-haired man who has become the hottest host of one of television's most popular shows, without singing or dancing or getting hootchy-kootchy celebrities to tell off-color stories. While executives of the major networks sat on either coast filling the daytime hours with consumer hysteria and the night with sit-com sex, Donahue became a favorite in the heartland of the country by leading intelligent discussions on a wide range of serious subjects. Is this what America wants? It seems so. For over eight million viewers a day, Donahue is dynamite.

His private life has also become a source of interest to much of the country. He's a single parent raising a family—and a single man involved with

a glamorous actress. His romance with Marlo Thomas has gone on for over a year now and shows no signs of stopping, and yet his private life with his boys retains the natural and appealing quality of reruns of "My Three Sons" (Donahue has four).

Still, what's made Donahue Donahue is a show that started 11 years ago in Ohio and has maintained high quality and viewer interest ever since. While other talk shows shuffle out guests like a pack of cards, Donahue devotes a full hour to one subject or concentrates on one guest; instead of jokes and chatter and show-biz types promoting their latest movie, Donahue's guests are often psychologists or authors or experts who have real issues on their mind. And the audience isn't separated from the action by cameras or an orchestra, but is sitting right there in a cluster of chairs that might have just been assembled for a PTA meeting. Although the shows phone-in callers are quizzed in advance by the show's staff (a recent telephoner announced that he wanted to ask if the show's guest was a homosexual—and was politely turned away), the studio audience hasn't been screened or rehearsed, and when Donahue goes out among them with his microphone, anything could happen. It's due to Donahue's skill that nothing disruptive ever does. "Would you keep it short, sir?" Phil says pleasantly to a red-faced man who looks about to break into a tirade against the show's feminist guest.

In a situation where the subjects are abortion, politics and homosexuality, there's the ever-present possibility of spontaneous combustion. Donahue keeps just the right control: Sparks fly but brush fires are snuffed out. Donahue's ease in volatile situations makes him more than the typical talk-show host. "I'm not an entertainer," he says. "I'm a journalist. My background's been in gathering news, trying to be fair, allowing as many people as possible to have their say. And in particular, I have great respect for the questions women ask. Men talk at you, try to lecture you. But women listen, they think, they're totally concerned with having a dialogue. Some of the questions they asked Haldeman and Erlichman when they were guests on separate shows surprised even me with their toughness and perception. I know some news reporters who wouldn't have zeroed in so effectively."

Donahue is in his office now. It's nestled in a maze of inner rooms, in a huge slab of a building that houses

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continued

Station WGN, about 20 minutes from downtown Chicago. He's just finished shaking hands with the 200 people who attended the show that morning. After the credits roll and the show is off the air, Donahue asks his guests to stay and answer any other questions the audience has. He himself heads for the back of the studio to shake hands with the crowd as they exit ("just like church," he tells them). During a week of programs in Philadelphia, he shook hands with 3,000 people a show, a feat that he professes not to find incredible. Today in Chicago—and every day—he clasps hands, poses for pictures, tells people he's glad they came.

Is he really—or is this all calculated charisma? Donahue pulls off his tie and tosses it on a pile of other clothes heaped in a chair. "People go to a lot of trouble to get here," he says. "I'd be crazy not to want them to have a good time. They're the ones who keep the show going. And it's a matter of pride, too. It's like when you're throwing a party and you check the crowd to make sure everybody is having a good time. Well, the way I look at it is that we're throwing a party every morning at eleven in Chicago."

Donahue's been up since seven, clicking around the TV channels, leafing through newspapers, thinking, always thinking, about ideas for the program. Although there's now a live-in couple who do the housework and cooking in his home in suburban Chicago, the mornings are still disorganized, with his sons and a Maltese terrier all "grabbing whatever they can for breakfast" and rushing off on their various schedules. By 9:30 he's in his white-walled office that's not so much decorated as doctored with furniture that looks randomly fetched out of storerooms. Mementoes are heaped in corners rather than displayed, and one of them is a large color photograph of Marlo Thomas that a staff member unearthed from the publicity archives. The office is not much wider than the two doors that open into either side of it, and Donahue is constantly in one door and out the other, checking research, planning future projects, taking phone calls (one of which is likely to be from Marlo). A few months ago one of the calls was from NBC, who wanted to talk with him about a job on the "Today" show. But it seems that Donahue is likely to stay put in the Midwest. "After ten years of hard work, I'm very committed to our show and to this part of the country," Donahue says. "But of course I was flattered that NBC wanted to talk to me."

Executive producer Richard Mincer and producer Patricia McMillen have been with Donahue since Dayton, when the three started a local morning talk program whose first show featured not coffee-and-Danish chitchat but atheist Madalyn Murray O'Hair. In the months that passed, Donahue took his show inside the Ohio State Penitentiary for a series of programs, and waited at

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PHIL DONAHUE: "LET'S SAY WE GET ALONG VERY WELL"

the Cincinnati airport until two A.M. to convince the incoming Ralph Nader to appear in a consumer debate with former General Motors president Edward Cole. Six years later the show had become so popular that it moved to Chicago—and up through the ratings until it was number one throughout the country in its syndicated time slots (which vary from station to station) and had earned Donahue an Emmy as daytime's best talk-show host. Today the show is carried by 147 stations and outranks competitors such as Merv Griffin, Mike Douglas and Dinah Shore when it is scheduled against them.

"When we moved the show from Dayton to Chicago," Donahue says, "I looked out the plane window and said, 'My God, what if we don't make it?' From the very beginning our biggest hope was that the show would be a local success—and we never had our sights set on being a hit nationally. But it's happened—and it's enormously satisfying to all of us. Especially since the 'hype machine' in New York tries to tell us that all women want during the day are soap operas and game shows. The network wizards do their programming for mental midgets—and it's a sad, big mistake."

Actually, Donahue had a different kind of limelight in mind when he was growing up. "My heroes were always athletes," he says. "Joe DiMaggio, Lou Boudreau, Ted Williams. Those were the guys I wanted to be like. But even though I was well coordinated and could always make the team, I never distinguished myself." When he went to Notre Dame, he worked at the college radio station—and it was then that he "started to turn on to the possibilities of broadcasting." Now, even after collecting Emmys and knowing that his name is a household word, his head seems the same size it was in his early days when he was broadcasting hog prices on Ohio radio. He lives in a pleasant but not palatial house in a suburb of Chicago, drives to and from work in a Chevy, plays on the station softball team and goes home at night to eat dinner with his children.

Although people fuss over the fact that he's raising four kids, Donahue doesn't think what he's doing is so unusual. He strongly believes that fathers should be much more involved in the parenting of their children, and considers himself lucky rather than courageous or beleaguered. According to him, the custody arrangement happened without commotion. In the mid-'70s, as Donahue's ratings were rising, his marriage was falling apart (Phil implies that his hard work on the show didn't help his situation at home). When the show shifted headquarters from Dayton to Chicago, the Donahues shifted, too—apart for good. Their daughter, Mary Rose—now 13—stayed with her mother (who has now remarried and lives in New Mexico); the four boys stayed with Phil. "It all

worked out naturally and easily," Phil says. The thought of going from a noisy home to a bachelor's existence in a city high-rise had depressed him, and he says that he needed the kids even more than they needed him.

Today one or more—sometimes even all four—of the boys go with him when he's on the road and the show does "remotes" in other cities ("I'm not at peace knowing they're at home without me," he says). Contrary to some reports that depict him as Super Pop, Donahue denies that he's the kind of father that throws himself into PTA meetings and Little League activities (in fact one of his kids asked him *not* to attend the games because the other players teased him about his "big shot father"). Even so, it's true that he spends more time with his children than many parents do. "I do my best to be a part of their day-to-day lives as much as possible," he says. "I try to change their eating habits, for instance, and get them away from junk food. But then I go in their rooms and find glazed-doughnut boxes under their beds. There are some battles you probably can't win—but you can let them know you're concerned and trying."

Because of this new closeness, Phil feels he knows his sons better than he ever did. "People used to say to me, 'You have great kids,'" he says. "And I'd say, 'Yeah, if only they'd do their homework,' or, 'Sure, if only they'd put gas in the car.' I used to push, pull, prod them, trying to mold them, though they were pieces of clay. I'd ask them why they didn't change their shirts or wear a belt or develop an interest in something that I wanted them to be interested in. But living so closely with them has taught me that they're people in their own right, and now I want them to be what *they* want to be. Now when people praise the kids, I say, 'Yeah, you're absolutely right.' And I tell the kids how great they are every chance I get."

How have the lives of the younger Donahues been affected by their father's success? They can take it or leave it—usually leave it. "One of the few times they've ever been impressed with me was when I got them into the dugout of the Cincinnati Reds," Phil says. "They thought I was really something because I knew Johnny Bench. Other than that, I try to soft-sell my job. I let them know that my job isn't as secure as jobs other fathers have with IBM or J.C. Penney. So they know it could all blow away tomorrow. But that's okay, too—because we'd all still be together."

Will Marlo Thomas be a part of all that togetherness?

"Since I'm an interviewer myself, I understand everyone's curiosity," Phil says. "It's only natural for people to turn the tables on me and ask me about my life. But I have to remain in charge of the answer—there are certain areas of your life that are kept healthy by their privacy. Look, let's just say that Marlo and I are getting along very well. Clearly the relationship is important to me."

MARLO THOMAS: "MY LIFE GETS BETTER ALL THE TIME"

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television special. As Director of Women's Interests for The McCall Pattern Company, she's working on developing scholarship and promotional programs; and as a feminist and activist, she's traveling constantly, speaking about women's rights at rallies, banquets, fund-raisers. And there's another reason she's on the road more and more these days. Her romantic involvement with talk-show host Phil Donahue has turned into what she's described as a "wonderful kind of living thing"—but since he's living in Chicago and she in Los Angeles, they need a travel agent rather than a matchmaker to coordinate their time together. Even so, they do manage to see each other just about every weekend, and they talk at least once a day—maybe more.

If anybody has the energy for such a long-distance love life, it's Marlo. Even now, at the end of a hectic day, she looks ready to spring from the starting gate at a moment's notice. She talks with interest about the things she's doing ("I'd like to get Muhammad Ali for the new 'Free to Be' record—he's shown kids what it's like to lose with dignity and courage") and about how pleased she is when women approach her because they've heard her speak and want to share plans that they've been inspired to make for their own lives ("We all don't feel so helpless about changing things for the better any more").

Marlo's life has changed over the years, too. Anywhere along the way she could have stopped in her tracks and stayed where she was; she could have played "Danny's daughter" or "That Girl" forever. But she's grown on, openly, to womanhood. At the age of 40, she's businesswoman, activist, producer and actress, and looking forward eagerly to whatever comes next. "What success means to me," she says, "isn't people knowing your name and making a fuss over you, although that's nice, too. Success means being able to do what you really care about, to choose what you really want to do."

One thing Marlo does really want to do—and always has—is to protect her privacy. But like it or not, glimpses of her romance with Phil Donahue surface more and more. She's been photographed dancing with him at Aspen and arriving on his arm at charity functions—and once during an on-the-air call to the Donahue show she told the world that Phil and his guest Danny Thomas were "two of the world's most attractive men." Marlo knows people are curious about her relationship with Phil—and yet she refuses to talk about it or him. "It's terribly difficult for me to speak about private things," she says. "The personal parts of your life are the most important to protect."

Marlo met Phil when she appeared on his show when it was still originating in Dayton; he was married, and guest and host were friendly but for-

mal. But by the spring of '76 Donahue was divorced and living in Chicago with his four sons, and Marlo visited the show again to promote her movie *Thieves*. Donahue's known for putting people at their ease, but Marlo can be a tough guest to crack. As the hour show rolled on, though, NOW member Phil and feminist Marlo began exchanging feelings about marriage, love and work, and at one point the conversation became so animated that Marlo punched Phil playfully. Things rapidly went from frisky to openly admiring. "This is what happens when an equal woman and an equal man get together," Marlo said, and Phil blew his usual on-camera cool and beamed happily. Marlo called him "a loving and generous man" and told him that the woman in his life was very lucky; Phil thanked his guest for coming with a little more Irish fervor than usual. Who telephoned whom after that isn't clear, but before long Phil and Marlo were interviewing each other off-camera as well. Now, a year and a half later, Phil and Marlo seem booked into each other's lives for an extended engagement.

"Sure, it would be easier if we lived next door to each other," Phil says. "It's exhausting going back and forth so much." Marlo put it in another way in a takeoff of the old Jerome Kern number she sang for the Chicago party celebrating the tenth anniversary of Phil's show: "We're both dizzy./ We can't fight 'cause we're too busy!/. . . This is a fine romance!" Still, they manage to connect for certain important times together. Marlo spent Christmas with the Donahue clan in Chicago, and went along when Donahue took his staff to Hawaii for a vacation.

Whether all this will lead to marriage, not even friends and co-workers can tell. "I just tell reporters," Phil says, "if it happens, you'll be the first to know." Marlo admits that "something magical happens when you fall in love. But love to me is an extreme case of like. The seeds of love are in friendship, and then other stages of a relationship develop out of that." Is she in love? "The people closest to me, the ones I love and trust, know how I feel," she says. "That's all that's important."

As a person concerned about opening women's lives to as many options possible, she does have feelings about marriage itself.

"The time of getting married for status or financial security is over," she says. "Today marriage is all about feelings and finding somebody to share the world with—it involves two people taking real pride in each other's accomplishments and still retaining their individuality. It's so sad to see a woman act differently just because she's around a man, just because she thinks she has to behave the way somebody else expects her to. But as long as you know you can hang onto yourself as a person, I think marriage can work."

Coming as she does from a close and loving family, does she regret that she hasn't married before this? "I've had such a terrific life," she says. "And I don't know that I'd really have done

anything differently. It's true that there's nothing like a family of your own, and I'd like to have the closeness of that experience, the giving of love as well as receiving it. If such a situation works out in my life, I'd be happy to have it. But I think people do what they want to do—and if they haven't done it, it wasn't right for them." She pauses. "Besides, you know, I believe that we all *do* have a family—a family of friends and relatives that you know really wish you well with all their hearts—and you feel the same about them. It's the family of people you can call to share an experience with, to tell how excited you are about what's happened to you, whether it's eating a hot-fudge sundae or having a baby—and you know they'll go *bananas* over your good news."

Whether it's a matter of marriage or anything else, Marlo has always thought for herself. In the beginning of her career, she wondered if people would compare her talents to her father's. Was she as good as he was, as funny as he was? Danny Thomas set all this straight. "You're a thoroughbred," he told his daughter right from the start, "and thoroughbreds don't watch other horses; they run their own race." Just before Marlo stepped into one of her first roles in summer stock, a package arrived in her backstage dressing room. It was a set of horse blinders and a note from her father. It said, "Run your own race, baby."

"Whatever I'm doing," Marlo says, "I ask myself, Is this my race or somebody else's? I think it's true about every part of your life—about the work you do, the place you live, about if and whom you marry. If you go through life living other people's priorities, what everybody says you *should* have or *should* do because it looks safe or impresses people, you make yourself miserable. When I left 'That Girl,' people said to me, 'How can you walk away from a successful series just like that.' But as much as I loved the show, I knew it was time for me to move on—and I had to do what felt right for me."

What feels right for Marlo can sometimes ruffle other people's feathers, and she can't seem to shake a reputation for being demanding and temperamental. But when a New York television interviewer not unknown for his own abrasive tendencies asked her about being "bitchy," Marlo responded with fire. "Whoever told you that?" she said. "Name one person who ever worked with me who said that!" The fact is that pinning down Marlo's supposed detractors is difficult. There are people who say Marlo's eyes don't sparkle as much as crackle, that her drive is more enervating than energizing. But while Marlo indeed may be a perfectionist who thinks of herself as A Star and won't take "mediocre" for an answer, those who work with her have a real respect for her dedication and standards of excellence. "She does expect a lot from everyone," says a former co-worker. "But then

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Why Phil Donahue Has Become Daytime's No. 1 Talk-Show Host

Boyish, white-haired Phil Donahue — who quit TV 10 years ago because he thought he'd never make it big — has shot ahead of Merv, Mike and Dinah to become king of the daytime talk shows.

And it's all because women are wild about him, insiders agree. Women are turning on Donahue's show because he turns them on — both sexually and intellectually.

By **ROD GIBSON** and **CHERYL LAVIN**

"Donahue has tremendous sex appeal. He projects a certain quality of vulnerability and hard-bought wisdom," said Dr. Eugene Kennedy, professor of psychology at Chicago's Loyola University. "Women feel they're talking to someone who understands them and doesn't patronize them."

The fact that Donahue is a champion of women's rights makes him even more attractive to his mostly-female audience, says famed psychologist Dr. Joyce Brothers.

"The key to Phil Donahue's success is that he has treated women with intelligence," declared Dr. Brothers, who has guested on his show.

And Chicago Tribune TV critic Gary Deeb — pointing out that Donahue often presents thought-provoking issues instead of just "fluff" — reflected: "Not only is he saying nice things about women, he also gets them thinking: 'I'm intelligent. I'm going to tune in Donahue, damn it.'"

"Donahue" is the Cinderella story of daytime TV. Ten years ago he had quit his job in local TV broadcasting in Dayton, Ohio, because he felt he was going nowhere fast. But a few months later, after licking his depression, Donahue decided to give TV a second shot.

Most stations rejected the show he put into syndication but Donahue kept plugging away, gathering stations one by one.

In 1976 his show was being nationally distributed, but he was still at the bottom of the talk show ladder. Mike Douglas, Dinah Shore and Merv Griffin were all being seen by about 4 million households. Donahue was reaching just 1.5 million homes.

Now, however, Donahue has spurred out in front with 4.7 million households. His closest contender — now Merv Griffin — has 4.3 million.

"Donahue seems to be able to attract the 18-49 (female) audience, which is what we're after during the day. Those are the ladies the advertisers are interested in," said Nick Free-



TREMENDOUS SEX APPEAL: Phil Donahue, king of the daytime TV talk shows, appeals to women because he projects "hard-bought wisdom," says a psychologist.



TOP TALKER: Phil Donahue (right), daytime TV talk-show host, is seen in 4.7 million households, ahead of rivals (from right) Merv Griffin, Mike Douglas and Dinah Shore.

man, program director for KIRO-TV in Seattle, Wash.

Added TV critic Deeb: "The other talk shows deal almost exclusively in celebrities and fluff. On Donahue's show they do have a celebrity, but they also have a good discussion on controversial, social or political issues."

Donahue agrees his show is different: "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'll tell me she's had an abortion, or

her husband is impotent, or that she's frigid."

From its outset, Donahue's show has thrived on controversy. He's gone out of his way to have such unusual guests as atheists, homosexuals, and men who'd committed incest. One show featured a birth at home with a four-year-old boy watching — and surprisingly, only 17 of the 120 TV stations carrying "Donahue" refused to air the show.

Another major factor in Donahue's success is his tactic of including his female audience in his show, declared Dorothy Ghallab, who is manager of station relations for "Donahue."

Ghallab noted that when transsexual Renee Richards appeared on the show, "you not only have her telling her own story but you have a woman from Peoria standing up and really questioning her on her right to do that. The questions are more penetrating because they come from the people's hearts."

Away from the studio, Donahue is far from controversial. He lives with four teenage sons in a five-bedroom home in a quiet Chicago suburb. The three oldest boys all work after school because Dad feels it's good for them.

Donahue doesn't throw his own money around — although

partly on his tremendous desire to succeed. "I was a workaholic," he admits. "I was driven, full of ambition. I thought being a father came automatically. I'm appalled at how ill-equipped I was."

Today, however, Donahue is doing just fine as a dad and his career is zooming. He also has a gorgeous girlfriend, actress Marlo Thomas — and his romance with Marlo, a leading women's libber, reinforces his identity with the rights movement.

"It (women's lib) is a very dear subject to him," says Chicago columnist Irv Kupcinet, a friend of Donahue. "It comes from the heart — it's not a ploy to get his women to like him on the show."

Summing up Donahue's incredible appeal, best-selling author Erma Bombeck — a frequent guest on his show — declared: "He's almost a fantasy to them (women) — he's the husband everyone would like to think they had."

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she never asks anyone to do anything that she wouldn't do twice as hard herself. So how can you get angry at that?" Marlo herself puts it another way: "A man has to be a Joe McCarthy to be called 'ruthless.' All a woman has to do is put you on 'hold.'"

"People tell me I expect too much from myself," Marlo says quietly. "But I was raised to believe in certain standards of justice and morality, and the rewards of my life come from behaving in this way. And I'd rather expect too much and be disappointed than not expect anything at all. You know, if people expect you to be great, the best of you comes out; if a director thinks you're going to be great, you get great. In a way, it's as though you can create people and situations by what you expect of them. When somebody is good and kind to me, I act in a better way — and the reverse is true, too. I think we all have to realize the impact we have on other people."

Today, whatever's ahead, the prospect of going on into the future is a happy one. "My grandmother was playing the drums in a beer garden in California when she was still in her seventies," Marlo says. "She was still having the time of her life. She didn't fit any stereotype. People would say, 'You can't do that, you're a woman,' or 'You can't do that, you're an old lady.' And she'd say, 'Says who?' She was a real role model for me."

"Where will I be five years from now? I delight in not knowing. That's one of the greatest things about life — its wonderful surprises."



UNUSUAL GUEST: Donahue talks on his show with controversial transsexual Renee Richards.