

August 2015



Indiana Broadcast Pioneers Newsletter



Richard M. Fairbanks Indiana Broadcast Pioneers 2015 Hall of Fame

The Indiana Broadcast Pioneer Board is pleased to announce the inductees to the Indiana Broadcast Pioneers Hall of Fame for 2015. The inductees will be officially recognized at the annual Indiana Broadcasters Association Spectrum Awards on November 14, 2015 at the Marriott North in Indianapolis.

The honorees were selected by the Board of the Indiana broadcast Pioneers based on the rules and guidelines set forth by the Broadcast Pioneer organization.

The Pioneer Hall of Fame Selection Committee reviewed and evaluated a large and impressive slate of candidates before selecting three deserving honorees for 2015. The inductees represent many years of service and immeasurable contributions to Indiana broadcasting..

The 2015 inductees are:

Dick Florea;

Thirty-five year career in news as anchor and News Director. Seventeen years at WKJG TV, Ft. Wayne Prior to those years, Dick worked at WMRI radio and WTAF TV in Marion, Indiana

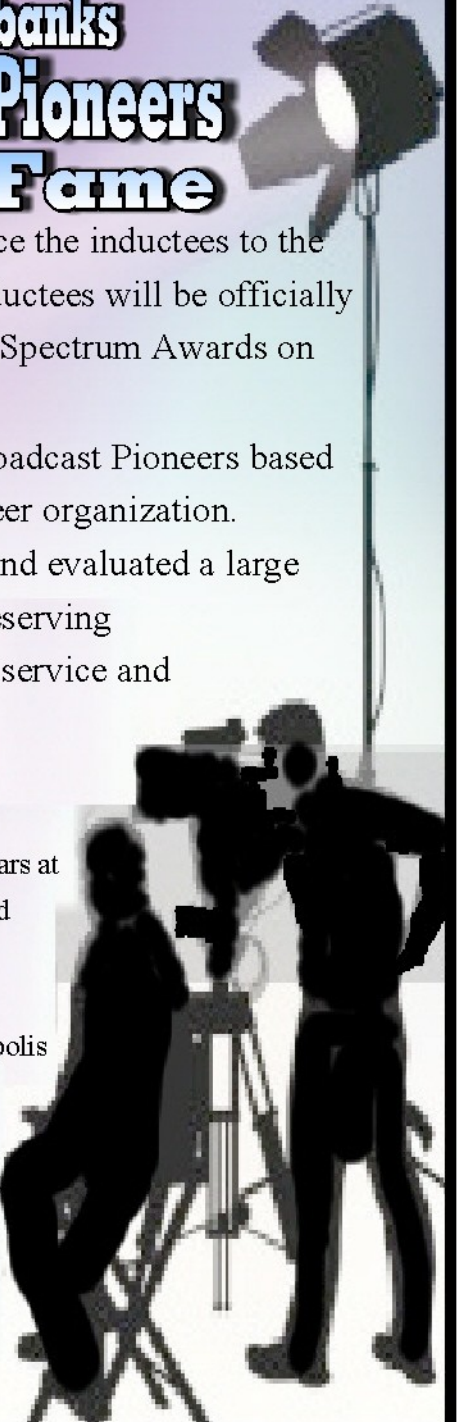
Howard Kellman

Longtime play-by-play Hoosier sportscaster and radio voice of the Indianapolis Indians for nearly four decades, starting in 1974.

Jane Hodge

Janie Woods Hodge enjoyed a spectacular run on WTTV-Channel 4 hosting children's programming, appearing every weekday from 1963 to 1986.

The reception will be at 5 p.m. with dinner at 6. The Pioneers will have a display in the reception area featuring information about the Pioneers and broadcast memorabilia.



Betsy Palmer 1926 - 2015

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Patricia Betsy Hrunek was born in East Chicago, Indiana on November 1, 1926. She died May 29, 2015.



Betsy Palmer

The daughter of Marie (née Love), who launched the Chicago Business College, and Rudolph Vincent Hrunek, an industrial chemist who was an immigrant from Czechoslovakia.

"Patricia" later graduated from DePaul University, where she studied theater.

Her first acting job came in 1951 when she joined the cast of a 15 minute long, daily soap opera,

"Miss Susan", which was produced in Philadelphia. After moving to New York city She was

"discovered" for this role while she was attending a party in the apartment of actor Frank Sutton

(Gunnery Sergeant Vince Carter of Gomer Pyle, U.S.M.C.). She had been in New York less than one week.

A life member of The Actors Studio. Palmer's stage work included a tour of South Pacific (as Nellie Forbush) and the title role in Maggie, a 1953 musicalization of What Every Woman Knows.

In 1953, she created the role of Virginia in the original teleplay version of Paddy Chayefsky's Marty.



Betsy Palmer, Jackie Gleason
The Time of Your Life (1958)

In 1958 Betsy landed the role of Kitty Duvall in "The Time of Your Life" on "Playhouse 90", starring with Jackie Gleason.

She later became a familiar face on television as a long-running regular panelist on the quiz show I've Got a Secret. She joined the show's original run, replacing Faye Emerson in 1958 and remaining until the show's finale in 1967. She did not subsequently reprise her role in any

of the various revivals of the show. Palmer was the last surviving member of the I've Got a Secret first version's cast of panelists Bill Cullen, Jayne Meadows and, Henry Morgan.

Palmer's career included major movie roles, appearing as Kitty Carter in The Long Gray Line (1955), starring

Tyrone Power and Maureen O'Hara. She also played nurse Lt. Ann Girard (the main

female character) in the all-star cast of the classic film Mister Roberts (1955), starring

Henry Fonda, Jack Lemmon, James Cagney and William Powell. In the same year

she also played Carol Lee Phillips in the film Queen Bee, which starred Joan

Crawford. Palmer starred alongside Fonda again as well as Anthony Perkins in the

Paramount production of The Tin Star (1957)

Palmer's need to purchase a new car was her reason for taking her most (in)famous



Betsy & Jack Lemmon
in "Mr. Roberts."

movie role in Friday the 13th. In an interview her initial reaction to

the experience was: "What a piece of sxxx! Nobody is ever going to see this thing." Despite her distaste for the film, she reluctantly consented to a cameo appearance in Friday the 13th Part 2.

She ultimately came to embrace her participation in the films since it made her more famous rather than infamous.

Palmer created the role of "Suz Becker" on the CBS daytime soap opera As the World Turns.

From 1991 to 1992, she appeared on Knots Landing as Virginia "Ginny" Bullock, the aunt of Valene Ewing (played by series star Joan Van Ark). Palmer also acted in a Mayfield

Dinner Theatre production of On Golden Pond in Edmonton, Alberta in 1997.

In 2005, she appeared in the horror short "Penny Dreadful" and in 2007 as the older version of the title character in Waltzing Anna. That same year she provided the voice of the title character, the ghost of a witch, in the horror movie "Bell Witch."

Palmer died on May 29, 2015 at age 88, of natural causes at a hospice care center in Danbury, Connecticut.



"I've Got A Secret" 1958
L-R, Bill Cullen, Jayne Meadows,
Garry Moore, Henry Morgan,
Betsy Palmer.

RUTH LYONS



It's very likely the most popular and most watched non-network produced program in Indiana during the late 1950's and early '60's was produced at WLW TV in Cincinnati, Ohio. "The 50 50

Club with host Ruth Lyons was carried in Indianapolis by the Avco owned station WLWI TV. Avco also owned WLWC in Columbus, WLWD in Dayton. The four stations were branded on the air as the *WLW Network. Ruth Lyons' radio career began with a one-shot appearance as an accompanist for a singer on WMH radio in 1925. WMH was the broadcast station successor to Cincinnati's experimental station 8XB. She was pressed into service one morning when the station's only female show host called in sick. Ruth had only a couple of minutes to become familiar behind the microphone but did so well she eventually took over as host.

Lyons prestige grew when she and other staffers broadcast non-stop during the Great Flood of 1937, calming listeners and asking for donations for the victims. Lyons praised the big heartedness of Ohio valley residents, but listeners said that their generosity flowed because they considered her a real friend and friends helped friends in need.

In 1942, WKRC lost Lyons to WLW over a ten dollar raise. Owner Hulbert "Hub" Taft (Taft Broadcasting) later said that the ten-dollar raise had cost his company millions in advertising.

Ruth began her WLW career as a host for an afternoon show called "Petticoat Partyline." Next came "The WLW Consumer's Foundation" featuring Ruth, Frazier Thomas and organist Arthur Chandler. The show was fortunately later renamed "Morning Matinee." In 1949, while continuing her duties on "Morning Matinee," Ruth debuted the "50 Club" on WLW. Named for the number of people in the studio audience each day, the 90-minute weekday show soon became the "50-50 Club" when it began simulcasting on WLW and WLWT television. By 1951, Ruth Lyons was a household name in and outside of Cincinnati.

The 50-50 Club was a daytime variety program that aired live from Cincinnati, Ohio every weekday at 12:00 noon. Ruth's soft heart, sharp wit, humor and her honesty was what the audience loved. Another big draw for the show was a continuous line up of big name guests who were playing in or passing through Cincinnati and Ruth was an equal opportunity interviewer. Everyone received the same straightforward and from the heart questions.



That soft heart became her legend. The "Ruth Lyons Christmas Fund" began with a personal appeal to her audience and eventually raised a half million dollars annually to benefit ninety four hospitals throughout her listening and viewing audience.

Above is a photo of Ruth's 50 - 50 cast members from 1965. Bottom row Bonnie Lou, Ruth's daughter Candy, Ruth, Marian Spelman and Ruby Wright. Back row l-r Bob Braun, Peter Grant and Cliff Lash. Candy died of cancer at age 21 and her death led directly to Ruth Lyons retirement in 1967 after forty-two years in broadcasting. Ruth died November 7, 1988.

Partial Guest List

June Allyson
Eddie Arnold
Milton Berle
Victor Borge
Cab Calloway
Perry Como
Sammy Davis Jr.
Phyllis Diller
Troy Donahue
Jimmy Durante
Douglas Fairbanks Jr.
Erroll Garner
Arthur Godfrey
Lorne Greene
Helen Hayes
Bob Hope
Hedda Hopper
Michael Landon
Liberace
Henry Cabot Lodge
Jane Mansfield
Johnny Mathis
Dick Powell
Nelson Rockefeller
Mort Sahl
The Smothers Brothers
Ethel Waters
Henny Youngmen

Wally Bruner began his broadcasting career as a weatherman at WTTV in Bloomington, Indiana in the 1950's.



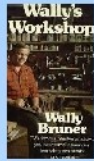
Wally Bruner

He later became a network journalist and television host. He covered Congress and the Lyndon Johnson administration for ABC News in the 1960s, was nominated for an EMMY for his coverage of the war in Santo Domingo, and was sent to Vietnam to cover the war.

He later was the host of the 1968–1975 syndicated version of What's My Line?



Wally & What's My Line Panel



Wally eventually returned to Indiana to host a local one hour talk show on WISH TV and later produced and hosted the nationally syndicated home repair show "Wally's Workshop." I was working at WISH at that time and Wally hired me to produce and direct his new show, a home repair "how to" program for "do it yourselves". Wally had leased the old building that was formerly the Tacoma theater located on the northwest corner of Washington and Tacoma streets in Indianapolis.



Tacoma Theater

Not long after we began the process of creating a TV studio environment in the old building.

Wally told me that he had purchased a large camera dolly from a video production facility in northern Ohio and it would be arriving in a few days. We had not discussed this and I was getting it "sight unseen". The building had most recently been used by a photography studio and although it had a great "cyc" wall there was no ceiling grid for TV lighting. Since our new rolling studio ladder had not arrived I began hanging the lighting grid, from a 14 foot (unsteady) stepladder. On a cold winter day, with a threat of snow, we received word the "Dolly" was in town and on the way. Apparently that was the cue for the snow to begin. By the time the long flatbed truck arrived the snow was heavy and the flakes were big. We exited the double doors on to Tacoma street for our first view of our new acquisition. It was huge, and even at first glance I knew it was old. It was later claimed to have been used for the movie "Gone With The Wind". As the truckers began to download our hope for a better camera shot the snow increased. The flakes were now about the size of a camera lens and it was getting deep. Once the dolly was on the ground we realized the nearly automobile sized tires were flat and unwilling to move, even in the now mashed and slippery snow. No problem, here comes Wally with an air compressor that was on hand for a yet to be recorded program. The tires were filled and all able bodied TV and truck staff began to push. As we approached the double door entry to the studio someone yelled **STOP!** Those of us with snow on our backs raised up to see the problem. A slim narrow rod on the top of the dolly frame made it too tall to make it through the double doors. It seemed the obvious solution was to bust a hole in the concrete header so the rod would slip through. Wally's part time carpenters, Doc and Dockie Keyes, took on the chore. Surprise! A thick piece of steel angle iron was buried beneath the concrete and ran from one side of the door frame to the other. While a group of us pondered the new problem Wally was already in action. I heard him coming from the back of the studio and looked up to see him heading toward us pulling an acetylene tank on wheels and wearing a welders helmet. Sparks flew, more snow fell and as we all stood buried to our knees Wally made the final cut through the "Krypton" bar. In spite of this admirable feat there was no applause, just the sound of squishing wet shoes and boots as we all found our place



Representation of "The Dolly"

and and once again began to shove. Heads down, we approached the double doors, only to hear another **STOP!** Wally had done a masterful job of cutting about a two inch wide hole in the center of the steel brace, unfortunately the post atop the dolly was not in the center, but off to the right! Following more spark flying and concrete bashing we eventually got the dolly inside

and it was a great source for some of the camera angles necessary to show Wally's home repair tips. The last time I saw the dolly was after the series was completed. I was driving past the now closed production facility. It was sitting in a parking lot across Washington street with four flat tires. Nothing else was in the lot and it was snowing.

INDIANA MUSIC AND ENTERTAINMENT MUSEUM

Indiana Music and Entertainment (IMEM) will



hold a public Open House at the Indianapolis Central library, 40 E. St. Clair Street, on Wednesday, August 26

from 6-8 pm in the Goodrich Room. Some of the museum's exhibits are on display throughout the entire month of August at the library's main entrance. On August 26, you can meet the founders, find out more about the museum's plans, and learn how you can help make this museum land a permanent brick and mortar home. IMEM is now accepting donations of historical music, film, and broadcasting artifacts, along with monetary donations. Donations are tax deductible. Volunteers are also needed.

Imagine being able to stroll into a museum and be able to listen to, view, and discover Indiana music, film and broadcasting history. IMEM will also be documenting, displaying and preserving artifacts and educating Hoosiers about the state's rich entertainment history.

IMEM, launched as an Indiana non-profit in 2014, also will host a benefit concert at the Vogue Theater in Broad Ripple on September 17, with musical guests Henry Lee Summer, The Fabulous Starlettes (reunion), Art Adams, Beki Brindle, Allen "Turke" Burke and Cathy Morris.

More information is available at imemindiana.org or on Facebook at facebook.com/imemindiana.

Contact:

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NRPB Request

The IBA and the Broadcast Pioneers have been contacted, to reach out to all of you and see if you can help the Radio Preservation Task Force. The task force was created in 2014 and grows out of the Library of Congress National Recording Preservation Plan.

Their mission is to find archives of historic recordings, particularly of local stations (that could mean a well-catalogued set of processed digitized files, or it could mean a room full of tapes that no one has looked at for a long time). Their goal (see attached) is to get anyone in charge of such a collection to fill out a short one-page form describing it, in the hopes they get a global sense of what is out there and create a network of similar archives, radio stations, associations and libraries.

Anyone interested in being part of the effort should contact Neil Verma (neil.verma@northwestern.edu). You can also use this link to let people know about the task force.

<http://www.loc.gov/programs/national-recording-preservation-plan/about-this-program/radio-preservation-task-force/> Over the course of 2015 the RPTF will begin to analyze processed and unprocessed collections to create a national finding aid.

Pioneer Contact Information

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Death Notices

Warren S. Bratt Jr. 73, known to family and friends as Skip, passed away peacefully August 20, 2015. Warren served ten years as a television programming engineer at WFYI Channel 20 in Indianapolis. As a youth, he enjoyed roller skating and skated in rinks down the coast of the New Jersey shore. He traveled the world in the United States Air Force serving in Alaska, Germany, Canada, and many places in between. Warren retired as a Master Sergeant at Fort Benjamin Harrison and was a member of Southeastern Church of Christ. He faithfully volunteered at the church food pantry. He was a computer geek from the 1970's. He enjoyed writing computer programs and was a computer doctor to friends and family. Warren is survived by his daughter, Vicky Westlake; son, Ricky Stav; and grandson Ryan Stav. Warren will be buried at George Washington Memorial Park Cemetery in Paramus, New Jersey with military honors.

Gary Hoffmann 60, an Indianapolis radio personality and DJ's TO GO owner, passed away Sun. Gary graduated Warren Central 1972, and then IU's college of broadcasting. While in high school he started his career at WIFE eventually becoming one of WIFE's Good Guys. From there to Jacksonville FL, Program Director at stations in Tx and Grand Rapids then back to INDY as program director at WZPL, WNAP & WFBQ. In the 90's he joined Bill Shirk empire handling KISS 106.7. In '72 Gary wrote, narrated & produced THE WATERGATE SONG followed in '94 by the OJ Media Circus record.

Preceded in death by his father Robert L Hoffmann he leaves mourning his loss Bonnie Burleson, mother, sisters Pam Roessner-Smith (Steve), Kam Burleson Lusby (Doug), brothers John & Kurt Hoffmann, step siblings Lynn, Steve & Jerry Burleson, Brad & Todd Coppedge, & 8 nieces and 5 nephews. Through all of Gary's successes and trials he was never without his sense of humor.



Gary Hoffmann

Betty J. Poorman,

94, died peacefully May 29, 2015 in Zionsville, Indiana.

Born January 14, 1921 in Dunkirk,



Betty Poorman

Indiana, she was the only daughter of Edna and Herbie Shirk.

She was a graduate of Dunkirk High School and attended Ft. Wayne Business College in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

She married Robert J. Poorman who preceded her in death in 1980.

Mrs. Poorman started her business career with her husband in Muncie when they opened the Muncie Bowling Center and later the Poorman and Associates Advertising Agency. In 1965, they started WERK Radio in Muncie. Then in 1984 Betty moved to Indianapolis to help her son with his broadcast properties, WXLW, WHHH, WBKS, and WYJZ and in addition WAV TV 53. In her later years, Mrs. Poorman helped in the health care field until the age of 90. She spent her last days at Zionsville Meadows surrounded by family and friends.

Betty was an active member of the St. Luke's United Methodist Church in Indianapolis and President of AARP. She was an avid bowler and loved the joy of living on the water.