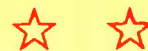


TV & RADIO LOGS — FEB. 19-25

# TV-RADIO LIFE

**JACKIE GLEASON**

**Can He Keep  
Up the Pace?**



**BETTY FURNESS**

**Pitch Girl—  
Pretty But Potent!**

**10¢**

THE BEST  
DIME BUY  
IN TOWN

**On-the-Go  
GLEASON**





FOR MUSIC YOU LIKE — just enough news  
and correct time — all day long

**KBIG**

The Catalina Station



**740**  
ON YOUR DIAL

## Seen On The Video-Radio Scene



UPPER LEFT: THIS IS HOW CRISWELL looks to Lenart. UPPER RIGHT: Groucho is caught in an inimitable mood. LOWER — RT: Who else but Vampira in an eerie candid shot? LOWER LEFT: Bill Stulla and a child guest seen in an informal and relaxed moment.

## Ear, Eye Inspire the Pen

Mrs. L. B., Whittier.

Just caught the "Dear Phoebe" show and may I say to all: don't miss it. It's really a scream. Gee fellas, TV is just getting better 'n better.

Whoops—here's "Musical Chairs." Can't miss that one either!

M. Monroe, Los Angeles.

We wish the music on "Justice" were not so loud that we cannot hear what the actors say. It is just deafening right while the talking is on. We are up and down turning the volume lower and then can't hear what is said.

R. V., Lynwood.

As far as I'm concerned there are only two shows on TV that rate with

me and they are a must in this house. They are "Roller Derby" and "Town Hall Party."

Miss Vera Hardy, Ventura.

I am a teen-ager and not known as a "square" and I really enjoy Lawrence Welk's orchestra. I am backed up on this by many of my teen-age friends. As for "one, two, three," that is Mr. Welk's own style and a very good one if I may say so. It is different and adds to the pep of his numbers.

Mrs. George J. Wicklin, Los Angeles.

The letter on Ralph Portner was most interesting as we also think he is an ace announcer. Marie McDonald was known as "The Body," and we would like to suggest that Ralph Portner be known as "The Voice."

# Anything and Everything!



▲ **JACK McElROY** tried to sell a show to KCOP, and instead it ended up with the station selling Jack a show—now known as “Conglomerama.”

**H**AVE YOU ever cornered a friend and started to tell him about a TV show you have seen? Of course, you have. A bit of a warning, though: don't try to explain KCOP's “Conglomerama” to anyone. It's indescribable.

Jack McElroy, the congenial and plump emcee (that's the understatement of the year) can't even describe it himself.

“It's about anything and everything,” Jack explains. “We do have some regular features on the program, such as Criswell and his predictions, George Fisher and his Hollywood news, Paul Dixon with his hand-writing analyses, Don Davis the ‘gadget king,’ and lovely Elaine Lynn and her fashion parade. Otherwise, we do anything that comes into our heads.”

“The closest thing to it on television might be ‘Panorama Pacific,’ but there are still many differences. In general, we try to do things that will please the afternoon audience, particularly the ladies.”

## Jack Fools Jack

McElroy himself is a veteran in the TV-radio world.

“But this is the first time I've ever done a show like this on television. All of the others were audience-participation programs. Frankly, I like this better than anything I've ever

February 18, 1955

*KCOP's “Conglomerama” is certainly different. No one ever knows who will be on or what will happen.*



▲ **WHEN IT COMES TO SIZE**, congenial Jack measures up to the best of them. Marilyn Hare acts as hostess on KCOP's afternoon TV show. From day to day, they expect anything to happen on “Conglomerama”—and it usually does. (KCOP-Hall photos.)

done before. It's certainly the easiest I've ever tried.”

The way that Jack got the Channel 13 assignment is an unusual story in itself.

One day in November McElroy entered the office of Jack Heintz, station manager at KCOP, and tried to sell Heintz an idea he had for a new show. As things turned out, however, Heintz was the one who sold McElroy. A simple story of how Jack fooled Jack.

Ever since he took over the reins at KCOP over a year ago, Heintz has wanted to do an afternoon program like “Conglomerama.” And when the jovial McElroy bounced into his office, Heintz knew he had found the man to do the job.

McElroy lost one show, but he gained another one. And he's not complaining one bit about the switch.

Charming Marilyn Hare acts as co-emcee with Jack.

“I'm not just saying this to polish appies, but Marilyn is without doubt the best woman I have ever worked with in show business. She's a real veteran. She's the first girl I've ever seen at whom I can throw anything, and it never turns into a curve. She is always ready. Considering the type of things we do on ‘Conglomerama,’ she would have to be.”

Unlike some heavy people, Jack doesn't mind being kidded about his extra weight. It's actually his trade mark. “I'm on a constant diet,” he explains, “but it never does any good.”

Why is it that Jack McElroy was finally selected as the right man for “Conglomerama”? What has he got that the ladies like?

“That's easy,” stout Jack says laughingly. “The women love me because I make good heat in the winter and good shade in the summer!”



# Can He Keep Up The Pace?

*A brief, intimate glimpse into the life of "Mr. Saturday Night." Jackie Gleason doesn't need fame or money. Why does he work so hard? What are his plans?*



**AN INFORMAL SHOT OF JACKIE**  
taken at the studios while he was auditioning girls for his famous chorus line of June Taylor dancers.

By  
**Ted Hilgenstuhler**

➡ **PROBABLY THE BEST-KNOWN AND MOST HILARIOUS** of all the Gleason skits involves the "Honeymooners": (left to right) Jackie as "Ralph Kramden," Art Carney as his friend "Norton," and Audrey Meadows as "Alice Kramden." (CBS-TV photos.)



IT'S AN OLD story in this business.

You want to see somebody, somebody big and important, somebody like Jackie Gleason. Then you get the reply. "Sorry. He can't see anyone. He's too busy."

Sometimes an answer like this makes you sore. It's just a brush-off.

Sometimes it's the truth.

For over a month, two TV-Radio Life reporters on trips to New York tried unsuccessfully to see the CBS-TV star. "He's just not available," was the stereotyped answer.

In Gleason's case it was the truth. He was doing his regular, and quite rigorous TV show every Saturday night.

A look at the entertainment section in the New York newspapers showed that Gleason and his entire cast were doing daily shows at the Paramount Theater on Broadway. Even the columnists were dropping items here and there about how overworked the comedian was, and that it was even affecting his health.

In addition, as he has done for many years in the past, he was continuing to make records with his popular orchestra. As if all this wasn't enough, he was also preparing a full-hour dramatic show on "Studio One," and it was rumored he was also going to do one of the plays on "The Best of Broadway."

## No Brush-Off

This time the "busy" signal was no brush-off. The man who had popularized the expression, "And a-way we go," had turned into a real go-go boy himself.

As luck would have it though, at five o'clock one afternoon at the CBS headquarters in New York, the word

came through that Mr. Gleason would be available that evening at 7:45 p.m. for a TV-Radio Life interview.

The narrow passageway of the stage door entrance at the Paramount Theater is a pretty crowded place at 7:45 p.m. It has a few advantages, however. The "stage show" has just broken, and all the pretty chorus girls are piling out the door for a quick sandwich or a cup of coffee with their favorite boy friends.

A burly doorman, with a deep voice and skeptical eyes, finally calls the upper chamber. Five minutes later a man named "Bullets," Gleason's personal manager, arrives. He's short, slightly bald, and despite his New Yorkish attitude you can tell he's sharp and shrewd.

Gleason's dressing room is on the fifth floor. The Paramount is not the newest building in the world and neither are the dressing rooms.

## Profile


The first man that "Bullets" introduces is Jackie himself. He calls you by your first name; none of that "Mr." stuff. You do the same to him; none of that "Mr. Gleason" stuff.

Jackie is wearing his bathrobe. He has just finished a show and he's supposed to be relaxing, but he doesn't look it. He sits in a beat-up chair, leaning forward, nervously, his arms resting on a dilapidated card table. He holds the script of a "Studio One" play in his hands. He glances at it periodically, seldom concentrating, and never turning to page two. During the entire conversation, he hardly budes from his leaning position. His one main movement consists of reaching for a bottle of beer, taking a swig, swallowing contentedly, and then waiting for the next question.

The questions don't come very





 **TWO OF CBS-TV's CRACKER-JACK COMEDIANS:** Gleason and Benny. Benny wants Gleason to make a picture for him this summer in Hollywood.

easily, and the answers are quick, vague, and serious. Besides Jackie and "Bullets," there are three or four other men sitting in a semi-circle in the big star's small, crowded, stuffy dressing room. It's never made clear what these other men do, but it's assumed that they have something to do with Jackie. When he talks they listen and invariably agree or console.

#### What's He Want?

There's really one thing puzzling about Jackie. Why does he work so hard? What's he driving, pushing, striving for?

It's not money. He's got enough of that, and if much more comes in, Uncle Sam takes care of it. It's not fame. It couldn't be. Even pound for pound, he's got enough of that to last awhile. It's not family obligations. Jackie's religion prevents him from marrying again.

"Why do I work so hard? To achieve knowledge and experience," Jackie replies pokerfaced. "Someday maybe I might direct or produce, but now I do whatever I can, whenever I can, the best I can."

As if he didn't have enough on his mind, he tells about his other plans:

"I'm going to start a string of night clubs, featuring the Jackie Gleason music. You know, the nice type of a place where people can go and eat and just relax.

"I'm also thinking of doing a picture this summer, which Jack Benny and George Burns have offered me. It's really quite flattering when great comedians such as they are willing to risk their own money on another comedian.

#### Nix on Hollywood

"Will I ever do my TV show from Hollywood? Not permanently, no.

Hollywood still can't compare with New York. They've got those enormous studios out there, but they made no provision for backdrops. And there's no seating capacity for a big live audience, such as in New York."

The rumors about Jackie's health are exaggerated, he says. He's in fine shape, he says.

He admits that he's a "lousy businessman." The boys in the semi-circle disagree with this. "He's a good businessman," the chorus replies.

Jackie, unlike many other big names in show business, does not consider himself a great developer of talent.

"If the people around me make me look good, I like them. If not, they're fired."

#### No Jealousy

Jackie doesn't get jealous if people on his show, such as Art Carney or Audrey Meadows, get more laughs than he does.

"Why should I? If they look good, it also makes me look good."


When will Jackie stop pushing? When will he be satisfied with just one outlet for his talent?

"Never, I hope. Why shouldn't a guy be in every phase of show business?"

There's some friendly yak-yak about business and pleasure and about nothing-in-particular followed by another long silence.

Finally, there's a friendly farewell from "Bullets" and the boys and Jackie himself. Then a walk through



 **JACKIE IN HIS FAMOUS "And Away We Go" pose.**

the dingy hallway, a ride down the dirty elevator, and a last-minute upward look at the bright lights of Broadway's Paramount, with the big black letters outside spelling: JACKIE GLEASON.

Where next will those letters blaze in the night?

 **IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE, GLEASON IS THE "BOSS" of his show.** Here, at rehearsal, he checks with technicians on camera angles for a "Honey-mooners'" skit.





# THE SHOPPING CENTER

TV-Radio Life, long a champion of honesty in advertising, and having pointed out in its pages some of the most flagrant misuses of TV and radio advertising, has felt compelled to stipulate that items to be advertised on this page to its readers shall be submitted for inspection. Each of the items illustrated on this page has been examined and passed for consideration of TV-Radio Life readers.



## WRITE SHORTHAND IN 4 DAYS

Get Abreviatrix—the shortest shorthand method. For the business or professional man or woman, teacher, student, the housewife who does club, community or PTA work, or wants to give her husband a helping hand. Explained in four easy-to-understand lessons. Highly recommended. Only \$1.98 prepaid. Money returned if not completely satisfied. Send order now to: FINELINE CO., Dept. 217, 303 Fifth Ave., New York 16, N. Y.



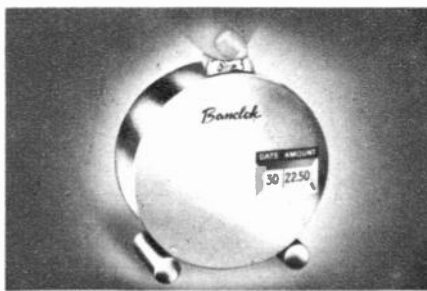
## SAVE MONEY ON FOOD BILLS

Get this handy all-purpose kitchen scale to check weight of meats, vegetables, groceries—loose or packaged. Use it for mail and parcel post weighing, laundry, etc. Good also for weights and measures in cooking and baking—removable top empties ingredients into utensil. Weighs up to 7 lbs. in ounces. Pays for itself in a short time. Specify green or yellow. Only \$2.98 prepaid. Ten-day money back guarantee. Send cash, check or money order to: Bailey House, Dept. TV, Box 55, Riverdale Sta., New York 71, N.Y.



## SNAP-A-TRAY

NEW SNAP-A-TRAY SNAPS ONTO CHAIR ARM, OR FITS COMFORTABLY firm on knees to make a convenient, sturdy, lap tray. A few of its many uses: Television snack table, writing table, table for bed-ridden, patio serving tray; also as clipboard for salesmen, routemen, engineers, etc. No danger of slipping and sliding. Measures 10"x15", comes in beautiful simulated leather wood finish that defies wear. Choice of attractive colors: Red, Green or Cocoa Brown. LIFETIME CONSTRUCTION. Only \$2.98. Write W. L. Sullivan, 1854 Clyde Ave., L. A. 19, Calif.



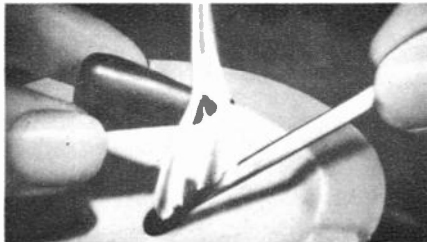
## Forces You to Save \$100. a Year

Get perpetual Date & Amount Bank. 25c a day keeps Calendar up-to-date. Also totals amount saved. Amazing new Banclok forces you to save a quarter every day, or date won't change. Automatic saver for gifts, vacations, time payments, etc. Use year after year. Start saving right away. Pays for itself in 8 days. Order several. Reg. \$3.50. Now only \$1.98 postpaid. Orders mailed same day. Mail cash, check or money order to: Leecraft, Dept. TV, 300 Albany Ave., Brooklyn 13, N. Y.



## Any Name on 2 Ballpoint Pens \$1

Schools are ordering thousands of these new Zaner-type ballpoint pens with proper length (6½ in.) and grip for easy writing. Same name (up to 20 letters), personal or company, stamped in gold on both pens. Your two pens (choice of red or black ink) at a price you'd expect to pay for refills. \$1 for 2 personalized pens. SPECIAL OFFER 6 different PAIR (12 pens) for \$5. Please PRINT name. Guaranteed to write and delight. International Industries, 2360 Jasperson Bldg., Culver City, Calif.



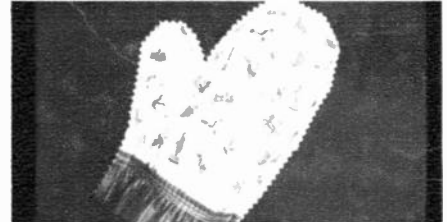
## RID YOUR HOME OF INSECTS—\$1

Amazing new bug killer Cones rid your home of insect pests the cheapest and most positive way! Just light . . . that's all. Cones burn like incense—invisible vapor penetrates entire room, destroying all exposed insects. No oily sprays—no mechanical gadgets—no after odor—NO WORK! Miracle Bug-Rid Anti-Insect Cones kill flying moths, flies, mosquitoes, gnats, spiders, roaches, silverfish, wasps. 14 Cones and burner for \$1, postage paid. Guaranteed to do the job or your money back! Order Bug-Rid Cones direct by mail from Sunset House, 721 Sunset Building, Hollywood 46, California.



## 1000 Name & Address Labels \$1

Your name and address printed on 1000 fine quality gummed labels. PACKED IN PLASTIC BOX. Use them on stationery, checks, books, greeting cards, records, etc. Your choice of 3 lines printed on fine quality gummed paper. 1000 labels for only \$1.00 postpaid. Six orders for \$5. THIS IS A SPECIAL OFFER. A sensational bargain. Ideal for gifts. Makes a wonderful, useful present. Satisfaction guaranteed. Handy Labels, Dept. 2360, 11440 Washington Blvd., Culver City, Calif.



## RENA-MITT

RENA-MITT, a new product designed to do a hundred jobs for you. Dust, powder, cat and dog hairs—all disappear like magic when you go over any surface, hard or soft, with the Rena-Mitt. Ideal for cleaning venetian blinds, lint from clothing, dust off upholstery and office furniture, etc. Made from light and fluffy foam rubber, Rena-Mitt is sure to make your housework easier. When soiled, just wash with a mild soap in warm water—dry thoroughly. Comes packaged, in a variety of colors and patterns. Only \$1.00—RENA-MITT, 2722 Adams Street, Long Beach 10, Calif.



## KIDDIE APRON

A real "work apron" for the cut-and-color set! Twelve pockets contain crayons plus a super-safe scissors that cuts paper and cardboard, but not fingers or hair. Made of sturdy denim in your choice of gay non-fade colors: Green, pink or blue. Comes complete with crayons and scissors for \$1.00 postpaid. No C.O.D.'s. Order several. Kiddie Aprons are wonderful little girl party gifts! Send \$1.00 each to: Aprons, P.O. Box 7, San Pedro, Calif.





↑ **AT ABC**, veteran Bill Stern is the network's number one boy, with his nightly sports show and spot assignments on outstanding events. (ABC photo.)



↑ **AT CBS**, **RED BARBER** acts as the Counselor on Sports. Above, the "ola redhead" (left) chats with Mike Wallace and Buff Cobb. Red gained national recognition as the play-by-play announcer of the Brooklyn Dodger ball games. Last year, the famed southerner switched to the Yankees. (CBS photo.)

## Who's Who Among The Sportscasters



↑ **AT NBC**, Win Elliott and Don Dunphy team up each Friday night on the Gillette "Cavalcade of Sports" boxing bouts. Don does the blow-by-blow, Win the color. (NBC photo.)

↓ **AT KNXT**, Gil Stratton, Jr., PCL umpire, "calls 'em as he sees 'em" every weekday night on the regular KNXT news show. Gil is also one of the top TV actors in the business. (KNXT photo.)



**AT MUTUAL**, heard locally over KHJ, Al Helfer has been justly dubbed as "The Sportsvoice." Al is known for his on-the-spot reports of almost every major athletic event in the books. (Mutual-Don Lee photo.)





# The First Lady of Commercials

*Betty Furness is as well-known to TV viewers as their sets. She's one of a few who can make a commercial sound glamorous.*

By Jack Holland

**B**ETTY FURNESS was very glad recently that she was asked to do an acting part on a "Colgate Comedy Hour" show. Not only did it provide some nice variety for her TV life but it also gave her a chance to get her hair cut.

"I manage to get to California several times during the year," Betty remarked with sprightly humor. "I have a favorite barber here and I refuse to have anyone but him cut my hair. I just can hold off any shearing job until I arrive in California for some reason or other—and he's the first person I contact.

"I love it here anyway, even though I live in New York. I'd come out here just to say good morning to a Westinghouse salesman. When my agent told me he had lined up a 'Comedy Hour' show for me, to be done in Hollywood, I remember saying to him, 'I have to go to California? Well, I'll just have to be brave.' And I ecstatically went about making plans. Why, I even came back here recently just to go to a New Year's Eve party.

"It was quite an event being able to do the 'Comedy Hour' show because it was one of the few times when I was able to do anything but my commercials for Westinghouse on CBS-TV. I've had several offers to do other TV shows, p'us offers on Broadway. But I never have the time to accept them. For one thing, there are so many obstacles in the way. I can't work for a show with a conflicting sponsor. I can't work on anything Monday night because that's when I'm on 'Studio One.' I can't do anything Tuesday because any show produced on Tuesday is usually on camera Monday—and Monday is my busy day. Life is rather hectic on the Furness front.

## Commercial Life

"But I'm not complaining. I love my work. I started doing commercials because at the time I needed a job. My job is not easy, though, and I realize it looks simple. The commercials are hard to learn and there's something frightening about standing up there all by yourself. What do you do if something goes wrong when you're talking? Who's going to he'p you out of a jam?



**BETTY FURNESS** may be Westinghouse's fair one but she is also TV's most attractive "commercialist." She has brought a new art to selling sponsors' products and is having a lot of fun at the same time. (John Engstead photo.)

"I've had a few tight squeezes but the most memorable was the time I couldn't get a hose off a vacuum cleaner I was demonstrating. I tried and tried and finally just gave it up. It was a bad spot because the whole commercial depended on my removing the hose. I went on with the spiel anyway and later someone said I made this remark: 'You take it off if you can get it off.' I naturally expected the roof to fall in on me, but no one was too unhappy. In fact, we sold more vacuum cleaners after that than we ever had before. And we got more publicity than we would have if the commercial had gone right.

"I was the first woman to start going steady with a sponsor. And I enjoy my work more now—probably since it is successful. I've been at it for five and a half years. And my association with Westinghouse has been very pleasant."

Betty has, of course, her own special dislikes about commercials and how they are given. She has always based her approach on sincerity, friendliness, and intelligence.

"The big peeve I have is the terrible kind of commercial that is done in a hurry," Betty went on. "The announcer yells at you, attacks you with all kinds of points and makes none of them clear. No one who yells at me can sell me anything. I also hate the words, 'Look,' and 'Listen.' If an announcer has to say, 'Listen' to an audience he's being insulting because they're already listening. If they happen not to be paying any attention they're not going to start being attentive because they've been ordered to.

"I dislike, too, countless repetitions in commercials but surveys show, unfortunately, that repetition does sell."

## Home Life

Betty lives in an apartment in New York with her fifteen-year-old daughter, Barbara. Betty, at home, is domestic within the limitations of the time she can spend there. She's seldom able to be home. She's a pretty good cook and is especially happy about her cook book recently released. It contains 987 recipes—most of which she has tried. They're all approved by Westinghouse, however.

"I usually learn my commercials on Saturday since it's the only time I have," Betty remarked. "And I spend a good many hours personally answering my fan mail. My letters aren't the usual kind of 'I like you on TV, send me a picture.' Instead, they are more personal and many offer interesting comments about the products I sell.

"I've been asked why, in the interest of less work, I don't do my commercials on film instead of live. I like doing them live more because there's a feeling of intimacy. Besides, people always wonder when something is going to go wrong. There's more suspense—which they like.

"I've certainly had my suspenseful moments, but all I can say is—'This is great way to make a very comfortable living.'"

Betty then added, "I've been so busy I've never even had a chance to see 'I Love Lucy' since I work Mondays. I hear it's a darned good show."



# Actor By Accident

*Actor Richard Webb finally found his niche in television as the exciting "Captain Midnight"*

By Donna Scott



THE ALL-AMERICAN BOY, otherwise known as Richard "Captain Midnight" Webb, almost became a minister instead of an actor.



"SCIENTIST TUT" (OLAN SOULE, IN WHITE SMOCK) is continually inventing something to aid "Captain Midnight" (Richard Webb) and "Ikky" (Sidney Melton) in their never-ending search for wrong-doers in the KTTV series "Captain Midnight."



RICHARD WEBB tells his pal Sidney Melton to take off in their plane to avoid capture in the episode titled "Arctic Avalanche." (Screen Gems-Lippman photos.)

**B**EING TAGGED the All-American boy is great if you're not an actor out of a job looking for work," exploded Richard Webb. "Whenever I would walk into a producer's office he would take one look at me and invariably say, 'Ah! the All-American boy.' It was uncanny.

"But, fortunately, I can't complain now that my type-casting has paid off in the role of 'Captain Midnight,'" said the husky, handsome blond actor. "Maybe it was my early farm life that has given me the All-American boy look. In any event, I might have been a farmer or a minister if it hadn't been for the lure of a movie theater.

"I was attending the John E. Brown College for Methodist Ministers in Arkansas and the rule of the school was that students must not go to a movie. I did, was spotted, and denied a future in the ministry.

"I crossed many stepping stones before becoming an actor. There was more farming, log cutting, posing for Arrow Collar ads, and the Army. While in the service I taught judo and gave bayonet instructions. After my discharge as Captain in the In-

fantry, I 'walked' into a role in the Alan Ladd picture, 'OSS.'"

Once Dick got over the hump into the acting field he concentrated on all phases of it. His credits include "Sands of Iwo Jima," "I Was a Communist for the FBI," "The Nebraskan," and innumerable television and stage road show appearances.

## New Concept

Currently Dick is star of the new "Captain Midnight" series on KTTV. To clarify any confusion which might exist, the old "Captain Midnight" introduced a blood-and-thunder movie and it was an objectionable program for children. This series was scrapped and "Captain Midnight" acquired a new lead, cast and premise. The imaginative adventure series finds "Captain Midnight" on the side of law and order. He is not a member of any particular organization but rather he is at the beck and call of all law enforcement agencies. The stories have no geographical bounds and most scripts veer towards the scientific. As a "do-gooder" the captain can go anywhere at any time. He travels by jet, of course.

The actor with the All-American

look enjoys television because it enables him to participate in his many hobbies during the non-filming periods. Dick is the hobbyist's dream of a true hobbyist. He has a wide variety of skills such as wood carving, sculpture, fencing, flying his own plane, horseback riding, out-board motor racing, deep sea and trout fishing and he's also an expert lapidary. His favorite pastime is fishing with his wife Florence from their thirty-foot boat "Captain Midnight."

Dick Webb feels as though he finally found his niche when he was cast in the "Captain Midnight" role. All adventure-loving boys from seven to seventy identify themselves with the daring captain.



# Radio's Most Informal Show

*"Anyone who calls me a disc jockey, gets his brains washed with a Soggy Knish," says KABC's Hank Weaver.*

By Ted Hilgenstuhler



RECOGNIZED AS ONE of the top news reporters in the business, Hank is best known to local sports fans for his excellent coverage of the Saturday night fights from the Hollywood Legion. His after-the-fight interviews, such as above with Johnny McFalls, are one of the highlights of each show.



FOR NEWS, SPORTS, or ad-libs, KABC's Hank Weaver rates with the best in town. Although the talkative and sharp-witted Mr. Weaver makes no claim to being a disc jockey, *per se*, his informal record-spinning show has gained tremendously in popularity since its inception. (ABC photo.)

ANY RESEMBLANCE between the Hank Weaver Show on KABC and any ordinary radio show is purely accidental.

To quote the ancient scholar from Brooklyn: "Dis ting dat Hank does for an hour or so in the afternoon, ain't like nuthin you ever hoid before in yer hole life. So help me, it ain't."

What is the Hank Weaver Show?

First of all, it has plenty of spot commercials and the inimitable Hankus spins records. Is it a disc-jockey show then?

"Anybody who calls me a disc jockey," Hank says, "gets his brains washed with a soggy knish."

The articulate and free-speaking ABC announcer admits he "knows nothing about music except what the average joker knows." Nevertheless, he constantly makes wisecracks about other disc jockey shows. He is also very critical of the music he spins on his own program. If he thinks a record "stinks" he says so. (Originally, Hank's music is provided for him by the station, but he often slips in records of his own choice.)

## Little of Everything

News and sports are also featured on the program. (There is no doubt in Page Forty-two

anyone's mind that Hank Weaver is not only one of the most efficient and honest reporters in the TV-radio world, but he is also one of the most respected—especially by his competitors.) There are days, however, when unpredictable Hank may read only a few news and sports items during the entire time he is on the air.

In the final analysis, the Hank Weaver Show is indefinable. It has no format. Except for the commercials and the regular news from the wire services, there is not one word of written copy. The entire show starts in Hank's head, passes through his mouth, and then goes out on the air-lanes. If you listen to Weaver any afternoon, it won't take long to convince you that he undoubtedly has "radio's most informal show."

Uninhibited Weaver, before reading a commercial, often advises the listening segment of the quarter-of-a-million motorists, "to pull up to the right side of the road, or stop where you are—I don't care—to hear this."

He has been described as "the only man in radio who can call John Foster Dulles, 'Jack'—and get away with it."

## Frank Hank

During station identification,

Weaver, according to FCC regulations, will say "this is KAEC, 790 on your dial." But according to his own rules, he oftens adds: "And if you are not tuned to 790, that means you're listening to some other station. As a matter of fact, it might be a good suggestion."

What do the public and the sponsors and the station officials think about Weaver's extreme informality and frankness?

"I've gotten a few complaints," Hank admits, "from the Johnny Ray fan club. But quite seriously, I have had less beefs on this show than any I have ever done." Which in itself is amazing, because Hank has more shows to his credit than the average disc jockey has commercials!

One day shortly after the Hank Weaver Show started in June, 1954, on KAEC, a station official called in Hank to discuss the program. Instead of talking about commercials, or news copy, or sports stories, or special features, the official had only one question to ask:

"Hank, are you having any fun?"

Tune in some afternoon to Hank Weaver's Show (that should be the real name) and see if you can figure out the very obvious answer.

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▲ **HARRY OWENS** and his daughter, Leilani, with a copy of the song, "Sweet Leilani," which Harry wrote. It was composed in honor of Leilani's birth in 1934. (CBS photo—Walt Davis.)

# Harry Owens' Favorite Song

*The man who has made Hawaii famous tells about the song he loves the most. And he also makes some provocative comments about himself.*

By Jon Bruce

ONCE THERE WAS a song written called "Sweet Leilani." It was composed by Harry Owens, who now has his own sweet-sounding Hawaiian show over KNXT. To date it has sold over 7,000,000 copies—5,000,000 in records and 2,000,000 in sheet music.

But the success of the song is only part of the history. The meaning it holds for Harry is even more important.

## The Song

"I went to the Islands for the first time in 1934," Harry began in his gentle, friendly manner, "on a three months' contract. For about two months I wasn't at all sure I was making good. In fact, I was more certain that I was doing a fade. A month later a baby was due, and I was a little worried.

"Then, suddenly, we started to catch on. The Hawaiians seemed to like us and we certainly liked them. When our daughter, Leilani, was born, I wrote this song. She was only one day old at the time but the music came so easily to me. In fact, I wrote it all in an hour and never changed a word. Leilani, incidentally, means in Hawaiian, 'flower wreath from heaven.'"

Harry's love for the Islands is actually a reflection of his own innate characteristics. This is a sentimental man, a man of peace, a man who has always looked for an escape from turbulent reality, and who found that contentment he wanted in Hawaii.

"I guess I'm an idealist, a romanticist," he said with a grin. "I like the easy life. But, even more, in Hawaii I have found something else I love—the genuine kindness of people. I feel a great deal of 'Aloha' (love) for those on the Islands.

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"The Hawaiian philosophy of living is summed up in these words: 'Don't do anything that will hurt anyone. Always do the best you can.' This has become my philosophy.

"Because I feel as I do I don't regard material possessions as so vitally important. They're necessary to take care of my family, but they are not the ultimate objective in my life. I don't need much to make me happy because I'm happy inside. And I want to be able to enjoy life. That's why I refuse to work as hard as many people do.

"My family is, of course, the most important thing in my life—and soon I'll be a grandfather for the first time. I have written a song for each of my children—Leilani, Harry, Jr., Timmy, and Melinda. I wrote 'Little Butch' for Harry and it has sold so far, without any kind of exploitation, 200,000 copies. But I wasn't able to publish the songs I did for Timmy and Melinda because they weren't exactly Hawaiian in nature and the recording company wanted only the Island music from me.

"I am, naturally, always writing songs. I have written a new number for almost every TV show. In fact, I turn out about three or four a week. In addition to the composing, I also write the script and do the orchestrations. That's why I don't want to work so hard and so long without sufficient time off."

## Home Life

Harry and his family live in a New England style home in the Pacific Palisades. Oaks and sycamores dot the acre and a half—and there's not a palm tree anywhere nor a vestige of the Hawaiian Islands about, in, or around the house. This is probably the most surprising thing about the

home, but Harry goes to the Islands so often he almost lives there.

It was indeed a fortunate night for Harry Owens back in 1932 when he and his band, who had been playing typical popular American music, were closing an engagement—and were breaking up. It was a sentimental occasion. Harry had no other job to go to, so he had the band play "Aloha." Later, a man from the Royal Hawaiian Hotel came up to him and asked him if he'd consider coming to the Islands to handle the music for the hotel. That was the turning point in his life.

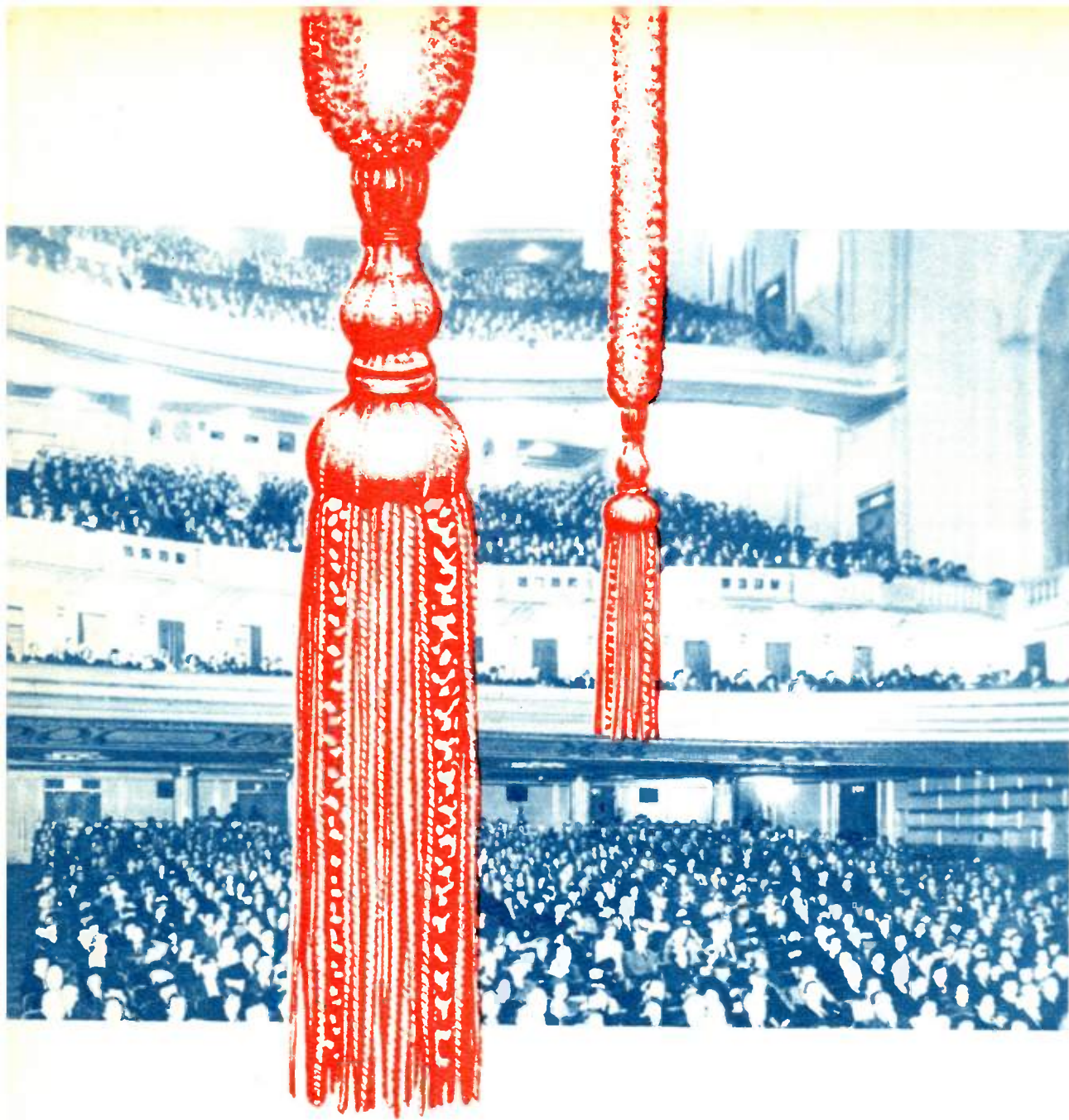
Harry Owens is now so completely Hawaiian that you hardly ever see him without a flowered sport shirt on. And he doesn't even own a tie. He has traded the blaring traffic noises for the quiet hum of wind through a palm tree.

▲ **THE OWENS FAMILY.** Left to right, Butch, Timmy, Melinda, Leilani, Helene and Harry at the entrance of "El Rancho Aloha" in the Pacific Palisades.



Photo Courtesy: Harry Owens





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