

Monday's Commentary

Channel 4 shows lack of class in Sonny's ouster

Say, how about the new guys over at Channel 4 forcing Sonny Elliot to take a walk?

The year has just begun and already WDIV-TV wins the 1980 Lack of Class Award.

Oh sure, when you call Channel 4 some secretary explains that Sonny wasn't fired. Theoretically, that's true. But ever since Post-Newsweek took over in 1978, the new management has been pointing about how Sonny doesn't fit into the new format.

Hogwash.

It is stuffy old Post-Newsweek mentality that doesn't fit into Detroit. As hard as the new management tries, its thinking is East Coast all the way.

The call letters are about as far as the new management's understanding of Detroit goes. "WDIV, we're for Detroit." Big deal.

So what do we get — Mort "the snort" Crim. Now don't get me wrong. Old Mort isn't a bad guy. But in Detroit he's a real sleeper.

Remember the station's promotions when Mort first came to town? They talked about how he had been a national newsmen. There we saw Mort next to a tank on the Golan Heights.

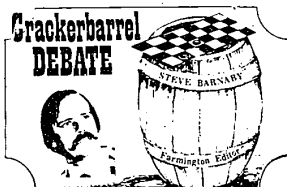
What Post-Newsweek fails to understand is that

there is a difference between local news coverage and the international beat. We don't care if Mort has been to the Golan Heights.

What we want to know is what's happening in the metropolitan Detroit area and Michigan. Parochial sure. But when it comes to national and international news we can always watch network news.

Apparently WDIV executives think Sonny is too funny. Weather is serious business you know. But WDIV fails to understand that Sonny is more than a weatherman — he's an institution.

He has been here to make us laugh through the good times and bad. He has been the moment of relief which we all need once in awhile.



Sure, I take my news seriously by reading loads of newspapers, magazines and by watching television. But even an old newshound needs a break once in awhile.

And Sonny gave us that break for 32 years. Just think back on how many Detroiters flicked the channels after watching the news so they could

catch Sonny on Channel 4.

Sonny was there to give us a chuckle through the countless layoffs at the auto plants. He was there through two major wars to give us a moment of humor each evening.

During the 1967 riots Sonny showed us that there was a saner side to life.

Sonny made us laugh through our tears of sorrow when the Kennedy brothers and Martin Luther King Jr. were assassinated.

How about those weekend television tours at the Detroit Zoo with Sonny? Thousands of us have learned about exotic animals through the years just because it was Sonny telling us.

And everybody, at least I thought everybody, knows that only Sonny gives "the official" narration to the Detroit Thanksgiving parade. The network celebrities botch it up everytime.

In a lot of ways Sonny Elliot is the spirit of Detroit to many persons.

Bao, hiss WDIV. You don't deserve him.

Sweet sound of humanity

No one has ever proved that artistic types are more sensitive or bleed more than the average person.

Yet we call upon those who can draw or paint or create lovely music to give of their creativity, time after time.

And it must be said that often they don't wait for the call.

Such is the case with the concert for Cambodian Relief at 8 p.m. tonight in North Congregational Church.

It's an extraordinary effort, combining the best impulses of people of all faiths and persuasions in an effort to further assist the devastated Cambodian people.

"This is the first time in this area that music has been the basis of a helping effort for Cambodia," said Marguerite Chajes, one of the concert organizers, along with Dr. Harry Langford.

Mrs. Chajes has been an unending source of energy for musical causes, a tastemaker and innovator for many years.

Twenty years ago, she founded the Pro Mozart Society of Greater Detroit, an effort she has said took "blood and tears."

"Mozart in Detroit was no easy matter," she recalls.

Langford, long associated with glee clubs and excellence at Wayne State University is also the choirmaster and organist at North Church.

JOSE LOPES DE OLIVEIRA, famed Portuguese baritone, will top the list of performing artists who share their talents in this humane cause.

He has received numerous international awards and has performed in many world capitals including Rome, London, Paris, Vienna and Munich.

He was guest vocalist in a Pro Mozart Society of Detroit concert. And Mrs. Chajes was a juror at the prestigious Munich competitions in which de Oliveira won top honors.

Earnestine Nimmmons, soprano, will assist de Oliveira and pianist Lawrence LaGore will provide the accompaniment.

Another dimension will be added to the event with the exhibition of photographs by David Krysak.



Shirlee Iden

A Detroit News photographer, Krysak recent visited refugee camps in Cambodia. His exhibition of pictures is compiled from that trip.

Sponsoring the concert are North Church, Temple Kol Ami of West Bloomfield and the Southfield Arts Council.

Dr. Wayne Buell, president of the arts council, is serving as honorary chairman. Buell is chairman and chief executive officer of Lawrence Institute of Technology.

MUSICALLY, photographically and in every other way, this is a first-class presentation.

Success, however, depends upon the response of those of us in the community.

Last year, for 365 days, it was "The Year of the Child." Most of the Cambodian children suffering malnutrition, displacement and pain didn't know it.

But we know their suffering continues as forces that of their families as their country is torn apart by deeds they cannot control.

Persons attending the concert tonight will be asked to make only a voluntary contribution. Let's hope the contributions are as first-class as the artistic offerings.

Anyone requiring more information should call Sandra Drought at 827-6625.



Craig Piechura

Don't order Duck soup

Flammable liquid placed in the club room and on the roof of the Steak & Ale restaurant in Southfield caused an estimated \$100,000 in damages there, according to Southfield Fire Marshall James David.

No one was injured in the blaze Friday morning. The restaurant, on Northwestern south of 11 Mile, was closed for extensive structural and cosmetic repairs.

The restaurant, which opened in August 1975, is part of a national chain of Steak & Ale restaurants owned by the Pillsbury Co.

Members of the Southfield Fire-Police Arson Task Force are offering a \$1,000 reward for information that leads to the arrest of an arson suspect. Fire Marshall David said the task force would also like to hear from the person who reported the fire at 5:39 a.m. to help investigators determine the time the blaze was set.

The task force's phone number is 35-ARSON (352-7766).

Investigators believe the fire broke out in the club room about 30 minutes before it was anonymously reported. Flames that could be seen rising from the rear windows of the establishment were extinguished before 6 a.m., said fire officials. Firefighters remained on the scene putting out hot spots of burning material until 1:30 p.m.

Fire damage was confined to the roof and the club room, a large area with a stage on one end and a long bar at the other end. Water and heavy soot from the smoke damaged furniture and furnishings throughout the entire restaurant.

AS FIREFIGHTERS slopped around the waterlogged restaurant Friday afternoon, an artificial fire flickered in a phony fireplace next to the completely gutted club room.

The bar, flooring, tables, chairs and chandelier in the club room were charred black.

Members of the "Steppin' Out" band stepped over the wreckage to survey the total damage done to their instruments and sound equipment. One band member said \$15,000 worth of equipment was destroyed in the blaze but vowed to play again next week.

Bob Ridley, restaurant supervisor, said the restaurant will open "as soon as possible."

"We've got 75 employees who need their jobs back," Ridley said. "We'll be scrubbing dishes tomorrow."

Fire officials began interviewing employees of the restaurant on Friday to see if anyone noticed suspicious activity Thursday evening or early Friday morning.

from our readers

Reader questions Ross' sunset stance

Editor:
I was extremely disappointed to see that Sen. Ross voted against putting termination dates in the so-called "sunset" bill recently passed by the Legislature. The whole purpose of "sunset" legislation is to force the Legislature to review existing programs by saying that those programs will be terminated by a date certain if they cannot justify their existence. Without termination dates, the bill allowed the Legislature to continue business as usual with no one having the nerve to vote to do away with any program that has been created.

What is most disturbing is Ross' apparent turn around on the issue. On March 20, 1979 he testified before the committee considering the "sunset" bill. At that time, he made a strong argument for the inclusion of termination dates. In that testimony he said, "because no termination dates exist all they (the Legislature) have to do to prevent any action is sit on the bill. In short S.B. 75 neither provides for a completion of the evaluation process nor assures legislative consideration of those evaluation that are completed."

I wonder why Ross had such an overwhelming change of heart.

MARILYN R. ESKEY
Farmington Hills

PTA extends thankyou

Editor:
I'd like to thank you for all your efforts on behalf of the Gill School bazaar. We had a very good turnout. Your promotional articles helped a lot.

Thank you again.

DIANA BROWN,
Gill School PTA

Staff lauded

Editor:
I would like to thank reporter Louise Okrasky and photographer Randy Borst for coming up with such a beautiful story about my dishes.

My ramblings on were so badly said, Randy is quite the photographer. Really.

Thanks much to you both. I've hoped one day I could proudly tell about my dishes. You did it for me. You both made me very happy.

So thank you.
MRS. EVA SCHWEIZER
Farmington

Mike Brudenell



Olympic boycott is best medicine

Slug it out with the Soviets and you'll probably end up with a bloody nose. Talk to them and you'll discover just how cheap talk can be. But ignore them . . . now you've hit a nerve.

One of the best weapons America — and the rest of the responsible world — has to fire at Russia over its invasion of Afghanistan is to ignore the Moscow Olympics next summer. Call it a boycott of peace-loving nations, the terminology doesn't matter. The message carries the sting.

"Sorry, cannot attend Olympic Games in Moscow. Previous engagement."

Before I become a target of eve-

ry amateur athlete and sports follower in the country, let me finish. I'm not being some sort of political killjoy. A few weeks ago I would have tackled Fort Knox to get together enough money to be part of Russia's Greatest Show On Earth — the Olympics.

WHEN A NUMBER of African nations boycotted the 1976 Olympic Games in Montreal (for reasons good and bad) I cursed for days. How dare they mix sport and politics, I said. What about those athletes who had spent years training for one event? Doesn't anyone care about them?

Well I cared and I still do about

athletes who are exiled from sport because of the dirty doings of their country's leaders. But I'm also sick of watching the same bully beat up the weak. And if thousands of athletes must forfeit their day of glory to embarrass and humiliate a heavy like Russia, so let it be.

Don't think a mass boycott of the Moscow Olympics wouldn't be worthwhile. The Soviets have prepared methodically to make these Games the most spectacular and successful in modern history. Their athletes have trained fanatically and will be at a peak come next July. A huge haul of gold medals is expected by the Reds.

THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT

has spent hundreds of millions of dollars on building new stadiums and revamping old facilities for its sporting extravaganza. Officials are expecting to recoup most of the money invested in the Games from television rights and the heavy spending of tourists during the two-week-long competition.

The country is hoping for good press from the hordes of foreign journalists who will cover the athletic events and day-to-day drama connected with any Olympics.

Imagine the turmoil and confusion in the Kremlin if word got around that no one — or only a few familiar faces — were going to show up for the party.

from our readers

Letters must be original copies and contain the signature and address of the sender. Limit letters to 300 words.

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Philip H. Power
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Farmington Observer

"Successor of the Farmington Enterprise"

Steve Barnaby
Editor

2332 Farmington Road
Farmington, Mich. 48324
(313) 477-5450

John Reddy, General Mgr.
Thomas A. Riordan, Executive Editor
George J. Hagan, Advertising Director, Fred J. Wright, Circulation Director