



Tom Riordan
Executive Editor

Walter Cronkite will stand out among GOP

Thousands of Republican party members will whoosh into the area next week.

But it shall be a non-politician who will command the most respect and prove to be the person everyone instantly recognizes.



Walter Cronkite said he's "anxious to get back out there," meaning he wants to return to reporting. Once he sheds his nightly news responsibilities, he hopes to tie in with a proposed CBS scientific series to be called "Universe."

Of course, this is the man who needs no introduction — Walter Cronkite, CBS television anchor man par excellence. To many he's like an old-shoe relative whom they refer to as Uncle Walter. And mean it.

Fate recently dealt me a marvelous experience, the opportunity to meet Cronkite in a casual atmosphere and later be among 20 community newspaper editors who shared a three-hour dinner with him.

Believe me, it was a tremendous experience.

CRONKITE IS A PRINCE of a fellow, low-key, warm, deeply concerned about the encroachment of secrecy in courts of law around the nation. He is TV's best known newsman, yet he never has lost his close touch and feeling for print journalism.

For some 25 years, Cronkite was one of United Press International's top foreign reporters and bureau chiefs. He covered World War II for that wire service, the Nuremberg Trials, then reopened bureaus in northern Europe.

He sort of backed into TV news and quickly mastered the trade by dint of research and hard work. His unflappable anchor work at national political conventions and his businesslike nightly CBS News presentations quickly engraved his personality on the minds of America.

Cronkite's sense of humor is delightful. He loves to make fun of himself, repeating strange comments made to him by people who suddenly spy him in airport check-in lines.

"Oh, Mr. Cronkite, you're my biggest fan."
"Hey, didn't you used to be Walter Cronkite?"
"Oh, Mr. Kaltenborn."

BUT HE BECOMES deadly serious when the topic turns to court closures, which are becoming increasingly popular with judges.

During our session together, Cronkite pointed out his concern about assaults on freedom of the press which have "tuned local court houses on a wave of slammed doors."

"There should be no timidity (on editors' parts). Put judges on alert that your papers won't stand for court secrecy. Be protective (of the First Amendment)," Cronkite said.

Cronkite warned that not paying strict attention to such situations and dealing promptly with them could eventually find newspaper editors with their backs to the wall.

HIS OBSERVATIONS are particularly timely for this newspaper and its 11 sister semi-weeklies. In the past three weeks, judges in two Oakland County District Courts have slapped suppression orders on sex assault cases.

In one instance our attorney was instructed to fight the order, which was so broad that the judge said our Birmingham edition could not even print that there had been a suppression order.

When the judge learned we were fighting the issue, he quickly recanted and said he had been in error. The suppression order was lifted.

The other case is more difficult. It's in Southfield. The judge admits he has issued a suppression order, but when our reporter asked for a copy of the order to present to our attorney, the judge said it hadn't been prepared.

It took the judge two weeks to issue that order. We are taking it to our attorney. Even though the order doesn't apply directly to the newspaper, it does apply to the police and prosecutor — our news sources.

As Cronkite says, timidity can breed more and bigger concerns.

Factory closings strategy is OU July 12 seminar topic



WILLIAM D. FORD

Union officials, legislators and special interest groups will meet July 12 at Oakland University at a one-day conference on "Strategies for Coping with Plant Closings."

The conference is sponsored by OU Center for Community and Human Development, Rochester. All interested persons may attend.

Conference participants say Michigan has the highest unemployment rate in the United States and is beset by adverse economic conditions here and abroad. Workers are threatened further by the recent expiration of the U.S. Trade Act and by possible cuts in jobless benefits.

GUEST SPEAKERS will include Ken Morris, director of UAW Region 1B, speaking on "Possible Options and Opportunities," and U.S. Rep. William D. Ford, D-Taylor, whose topic is "The Washington View," and Robert (Buddy) Battle, director, UAW Region 1A, talking on "The Minority Perspective."

Other speaker and topics are state Rep. Perry Bullard, D-Ann Arbor, "Michigan Fights Back," Marya Symonski, aide to U.S. Sen. Donald Riegle,

Business Alternatives;" Ken Dobson, Michigan Economic Growth Corp., "Economic Diversification;" Ernest Dillard, UAW, "Solutions: The Senior Worker Viewpoint;" and Jessie Bernstein, consultant, "Stress Management."

DON LUSSIER, OU Department of Continuing Education, will speak on "Outplacement Training." Jacqueline Scherer, director of the Center for Community and Human Development, will provide the conference summary entitled "The Next Steps."

The conference is being held in conjunction with a two-week university forum reviewing the impact of plant closings. In the forum, OU professor will discuss the ways in which plant closings affect individuals and communities from economic, social, and psychological perspectives.

Persons interested in attending the conference or forum can call 377-3272 or 377-3216.

The conference will be held from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. in Varner Recital Hall. The minimal fee of \$5 includes lunch.

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