

PRAIRIE  
FARMER'S

*New*

**ASHFC**  
See Pg. 3

# Weekly

MARCH 9  
1935



**JACK HOLDEN - Pg. 13**

**Barn Dance  
-Back Stage**

**Programs**

# LISTENERS' MIKE



## Feature Coming

WLS: "Please print in your magazine who the fourteen couples are that got married while at WLS. Also what year each couple was married."  
—Iris Swearingen, Wapella, Ill.

(A feature story on these WLS folks will appear in an early issue.)

Listeners, this is your page. Your letters concerning the magazine, the programs, or other letters, will be welcome. Please hold your "scripts" to one hundred words. Address "Listeners' Mike," WLS.

## Disagrees

WLS: "I disagree very much with Miss Anna Carr. I don't think we hear enough of Pat Buttram or Lulu Belle. Why don't we hear more of them on the Barn Dance?"—Helen Anderson, Zion, Illinois.

## Why, Mr. Bailey!

WLS: "We know all your entertainers are fine . . . but you have one on your programs, Pat Buttram—well, Pat is better than all the rest. We always listen to the early morning program and never tune out. We wish Pat a lot of good luck and hope there never will be a change. If there are any ladies in Grand Rapids who don't like Pat, they can throw their radios out instead of tuning them out."—Fred L. Bailey, Rib Lake, Wis.

## Just Too Bad

WLS: "'Pat Buttram spoils the program.' Now isn't that too bad? To satisfy one out of a couple of thousand, the program ought to be changed. I think WLS is too wise to make such changes. . . . As for giggles in the middle of songs, aren't the stars only human? They have as much fun putting on the program as we have listening in. Here's a vote for the humorous side of WLS, the best station on the dial."—Violet Zemek, Chicago.

## Regardless

WLS: "Regardless of what Miss Anna Carr says, we certainly enjoy Pat Buttram. He is always welcome in our home. He has plenty of wit and a keen sense of humor. The announcers' program is among our favorites."—Mr. and Mrs. Earl Harker, La Porte, Ind.

## We're Glad, Too

WLS: "I am mighty glad I am listed as a subscriber to the new magazine. For good, clean, uplifting, dependable entertainment, WLS can't be beat."—Esther Schrandt, Irving, Ill.

## Hates to Miss Him

WLS: "My mother just read a note in the weekly from Miss Carr telling how she feels about Pat Buttram. She says he spoils all the programs. Well, everyone at our house disagrees with her. We think that Pat is just about as good an artist as we have ever heard and we hate to miss any of his programs."  
—Ruth Franz, West Allis, Wis.

## 11 Strong

WLS: "There are 11 in our family and we all like and listen to Pat Buttram. He's swell."—Elmira Stuessy, Beloit, Wis.

Listener Carr, will you be good, now? These letters are only a few flakes from the snowstorm of indignant Buttram fan mail which descended upon us.

## Joe Likes It

WLS: ". . . The weekly is just the magazine we have been wanting for a long time. I haven't missed a Barn Dance broadcast since it has been at the Eighth Street Theatre."—Joe Ellison, Sunnyside, Ga.

## Ahoy, John

WLS: "I agree with Miss Bollom of Chippewa Falls. We like the old time songs but I surely wish John Lair would talk more. I could listen for hours to him . . ."—Mrs. M. Hoyt, Rhinelander, Wis.

## The New WLS Weekly

BURRIDGE D. BUTLER, Publisher  
Copyright, 1935, Prairie Farmer Publishing Co.  
1230 Washington Blvd., Chicago  
Indianapolis: 17 West Market Street  
New York City: 250 Park Avenue  
Subscription Price, \$1.00 a Year  
Single Copy, 5 cents  
Issued Every Saturday

Application for entry as second-class matter is pending.

JULIAN T. BENTLEY, Editor

VOLUME 1 NUMBER 4  
March 9, 1935



Floyd and Clara Keepers with a small Mexican friend.

Busy as the proverbial beavers were Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Keepers who were leaders of the Prairie Farmer-WLS tour to old Mexico. R. E. Sullivan's camera caught them at San Martin market about to take a native taxi.

Dan Hosmer, versatile radio entertainer and stage performer, is a new and welcome addition to the staff. Of particular interest to listeners will be the fact that starting March 11, Dan will begin a series of sketches to be heard at 7:45 a. m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday. It will be interesting to note that Dan is master of 26 dialects and in one program alone he reads the parts of 18 different men and women, the characters ranging from a Chinese laundry man to a member of the English nobility. Dan's a grand chap and his wealth of experience from 10 years in radio and almost 25 behind the footlights will provide listeners with countless hours of wholesome, refreshing entertainment.

Wyn Orr probably will have his hands full this afternoon (March 9) when, singlehanded, he attempts to interview the Cumberland Ridge Runners with John Lair and Linda Parker. The cross examination is scheduled for the Fanfare spot during Homemakers' Hour.

Lillian White, air-actress heard on many WLS shows, is planning to "rice and old-shoe" it in June. Husband-to-be is a business manager.

Womens' clubs are responding to Mrs. Mary Wright's invitation to visit the Studio for Homemakers' Play broadcasts. Thirty to 50 guests can be accommodated comfortably. The applause emanating from the studio comes from these appreciative audiences. Glad to have your organization as guests. Communicate with Mrs. Wright for details.

# FLASHES

Taxi • Dan • Argument  
Judges • Hills • Mail

Socialized medicine will be argued pro and con tomorrow morning when debaters from Purdue university and the University of Chicago meet before our mikes. Combere Loveless and Andrew Wrightman will speak for Purdue in arguing the affirmative. Chicago, on the negative, will be represented by Irving Axelrod and J. Barney Kleinschmidt.

Not a word—not even a whisper comes from the judging committee studying all contest entries for the name of this magazine. Looks now as if it will take longer than another week. Just stand by, everybody, the judges say this is too big and important a job to be hurried.

Listeners kept the mail sacks bulging with more than a third of a million letters to the station during the first seven weeks of 1935. The exact number, 357,781, represents nearly 100 per cent increase in mail over the same period last year. And last year, WLS smashed all records in receiving 1,051,041, or one letter every 30 seconds. The week of February 11, a total of 72,555 letters was received.

WLS has always been glad to send its road shows to play performances at state hospitals and other institutions. WLS On Parade, on the road only since December 1, has played a great many of these institutions. Some of those played lately are:

Joliet Hospital for the Criminal Insane; Soldier's and Sailor's Orphans Home, Bloomington, Ill.; The Tuberculosis Sanatorium, Bushnell, Ill.; Soldier's and Sailor's Sanatorium, Madison, Wis.; Wisconsin State Hospital, Mendota, Wis., and Oak Forest Infirmary, Chicago.

Many have asked whether smiling Bill O'Connor, WLS soloist, really did practice law in Kansas before entering radio. He did for three successful years, before Chicago and music lured him to another field, one which has won him thousands of friends.

Pat Buttram, who conducts the Oshkosh Radio School for Beginners 'Jes' Startin', is reported to be about to request the privilege of broadcasting some setting up exercises each morning.

"Tain't that I particularly care whether anybody follers out the exercises," said Pat, "but I want them jes' fer myself. Now down home I uster chop wood, tote out the ashes, milk the cows and have plenty else to do to git limbered up. Up here on the radio, about all I git to do is exercise my mouth and take a walk in between times."

One of the newer entertainment groups on WLS, Otto and His Tune Twisters, play and sing almost everything that may be classed as "novelty." They may play a toe-ticklin' old time fiddlin' tune and follow it right up with a comical German song. Then, like as not, they'll sing a sweet cowboy ballad.



Roland Ade, until recently manager of the WLS Barn Dance Unit, has this to say about the recent trip into Kentucky: "Well, in two or three of the hotels we stayed in you couldn't look out of the window, and see anything. The hills were so steep that you had to go out and lie down in the street to see the sky."

# BARN DANCE

## ...Backstage...

The Original Barn Dance,  
Radio's Oldest Show,  
Heads Into 12th Year



At the extreme left the network Barn Dance "brain trust" watches a studio rehearsal; Uncle Ezra "cuts the mustard" with the Hoosier Hot Shots; the Westerners take the spotlight at the Eighth Street Theatre; Cumberland Ridge Runners pose between numbers backstage; at top right, Engineer Tommy Rowe "rides the gains" on the complicated program; below, it's 9:30 p. m.—the first show's over, and the stampede for backstage lunch is on. How many do you recognize? Other pictures show typical rehearsal scenes.



"Everybody take your places,  
"Just like horses at the races."  
"First couple out and swing to the left . . ."

THIS old time square dance call rings out from the Old Hayloft over a coast-to-coast network every Saturday night. And in untold thousands of homes from Northern Canada to the Texas border, in town and country, furniture is pulled back, rugs are rolled away and the WLS National Barn Dance is in full swing.

Thus it has been every Saturday night for almost 11 years. The titillating tempos of cowbells, fiddles, guitars, banjos, harmonicas and other instruments typical of so-called "rustic rhythm" have been heard each week since that first Saturday, April 12, 1924—more than 560 Saturday night programs.

The National Barn Dance has done more to preserve and maintain interest in real American folk music than perhaps any other radio program.

With the advent of WLS into the 50,000 watt class and later with Alka Seltzer sending a full hour of the Barn Dance over a nationwide NBC network, the program definitely became an international feature.

Letters have poured in from every state in the union, from all the Canadian provinces, from Mexico, Bermuda, Hawaii, from Scotland, Sweden, the Dutch West Indies, Alaska, from ships and submarines at sea and even from New Zealand where the program is received on Sunday afternoon.

Despite the barrier of a strange tongue, the Gringo shindig every Saturday night is welcomed by a large number of Mexico City listeners. The tintinnabulation of the

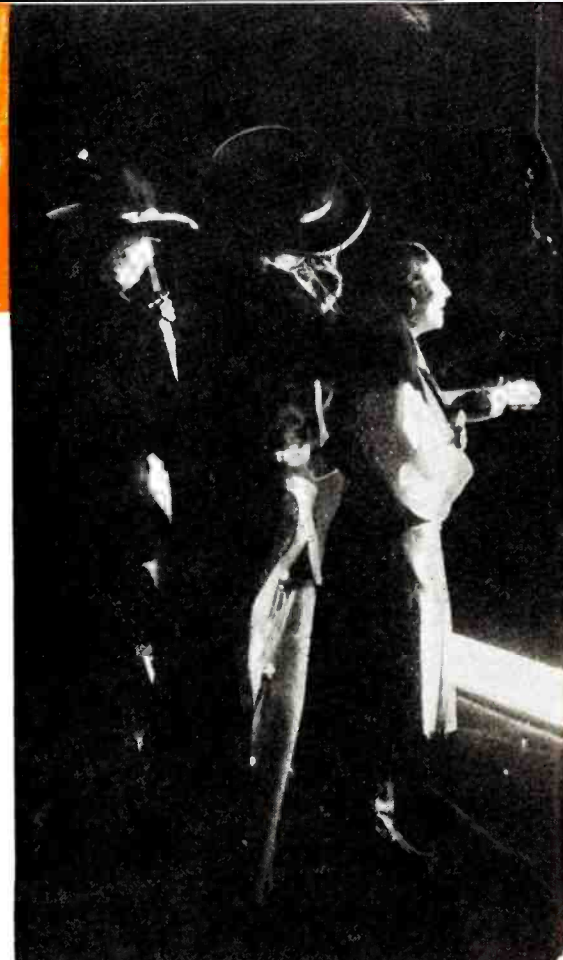


Yankee cowbells, the lively rhythms of mountain and rural music comprise a language readily understood by our foreign neighbors.

A great many writers along Radio Row have turned their hand to explaining the success of the Barn Dance. Nearly all agreed that the informality and friendliness of the program had much to do with its popularity.

That is true but also to be noted is the genuineness of the whole production. Most of the boys and girls who take part in the old-fashioned songs and dances really have attended just such parties at home in the country and in the southern hill country.

When the Cumberland Ridge Run-



ners swing into "Cumberland Gap," the Dean Boys sing "A Heart in the Heart of Texas," or the Westerners sing "Rounded Up In Glory," they are doing numbers they learned at their sources.



WLS officials have reason to believe that it is this type of sincere, old-fashioned heart songs that their listeners like best.

Back in 1924, when WLS first took the air, a different type of music was broadcast during the first few days of the station's life. The response from the public was merely luke warm. Listeners were polite, of course. Beethoven, Brahms and Bach were all right, but somehow they didn't seem to stir the ether appreciably.

Then, on the station's first Saturday night, something happened that changed the whole course of events for WLS.

Edgar Bill, first manager of WLS, en route to the studios on the Hotel

Sherman, stopped at a drug store. A radio there was tuned to WLS.

Bill listened. What was this? Instead of the "long haired" music which had been featured, the loud speaker was spilling forth the merry antics of three fiddles, a guitar, harmonica and an accordion. "Turkey in the Straw" with the high pitched, insistent voice of a square dance "caller" was flooding the drug store.

Ed Bill hastily left the drug store and hurried to the studios. He was filled with misgivings. What would the public think of such undignified music?

The answer was not long in coming. Within a few minutes, telegraph boys began arriving with a veritable snow-

(Continued on page 12)

# FANFARE



Q. and A ● RANGERS  
FLIER ● PAGEANT  
CHUBBY ● HEZZIE  
By WYN ORR

GOOD-DAY, Fanfare Friends. Since last we sat down for a chat about folks and friends at WLS, many items of interest and curiosity have come to light, questions, problems, and comments. Mighty nice of you people to be so frank in your letters. That's the way we like 'em . . . helps us to shape the shows so they are more appealing to you.

But, to get to the questions. Here's one from Algoma, Wisconsin, asking whom Adele Jensen of Winnie, Lou, and Sally married several weeks ago. The lucky man is Buddy McDowell. This item corrects an error in last week's issue. The other two girls, Helen and Eileen are still single.

Miss Helen, of Norway, Michigan, has directed her inquiries direct to Fanfare, "WLS Weekly," because she cannot listen to our daily air-spots at two o'clock. We would like to have any of you friends who cannot listen, because of business or any other reason, do the same thing.

Mrs. Henry Graser of Monomonee Falls, Wisconsin, is anxious to know the personnel of the WLS Rangers Quartet. Which brings up a good point. Vocally, the Rangers are a quartet. Instrumentally—a quintet. You see: Ozzie Westley, Clyde Mofett, Lew Story, and Walter Tuite sing and play, while Merton Minnick joins their vocal and instrumental ensembles as violinist.

Speaking of the Rangers, Ozzie Westley, is a confirmed aero-enthusiast. At one time was co-owner of a plane. Delighted in flying out to Iowa, and distant points to visit friends. Nobel Cain—NBC Musical Production Chief was Ozzie's partner. Then came love into Ozzie's life . . . love and Mary Schnoor, so he listened to her pleadings, and forsook the air for a haven at home. Disposed of his interest in the plane to his friend Cain, who just last year, unluckily cracked up in Michigan. Looks as though Ozzie got out from over none too soon.

Is Romelle Fay married, and if so, what is her wedded name? In private life, Romelle Fay is Mrs. Edwin Cuniff. Husband Ed is a commercial representative for station WROK in Rockford, Ill.

M. E. Morris of Bloomington, Indiana, asks the name of the accordion player with Rube Tronson's Texas Cowboy Band. He who manipulates the stomach steinway is Mike Dutche.

From Zeeland, Michigan, Mrs. Jacob M. Van den Bosch, writes to ask the ages and home of the Flannery Sisters. The Flannery Sisters and their ages are respectively, Allie, 19, and Billie, 21. Their home is in Gladstone, Michigan.

Did you know that Walter Steindel, than whom there are few finer pianists in these here parts, is also conductor of that nationally-famous singing organization, the Chicago Singverein. Upon Walter's sturdy shoulders falls the responsibility of directing these 125 trained voices each year. Their annual concert will be given about the middle of May.

When is a program director not a program director was a question hurled at this patient purveyor of personal particulars, just a week ago. The answer is, when he becomes an actor. That is precisely what George C. Biggar, genial director of programs, did a couple of weeks ago. The Gary Memorial Church of Wheaton, Illinois, decided to have a pageant and depict various incidents in the life of the Father of Our Country. The community was scoured to locate the ideal man. Someone saw George and collared him. He consented with pleasure.

So at the annual Washington and Lincoln Dinner our Program Director appeared, clad in the garments of the Colonial period and supported by an excellent local cast. We have been told by various observers that the presentation was a splendid success, no little part of which was due to George.

From Avonell Peterson of Newton, Iowa, comes a request for the names of the boys who participate in the Oshkosh Overall Program each weekday morning at 6:45. In the first place, the announcer is Joe Kelly. Pat Buttram conducts the not-too-smoothly-running radio school, with the Hoosier Sod Busters, Reg Kross and Howard Black, and Jimmie and Eddie Dean. Bill Meredith scripts the show in conjunction with gag-man Buttram, while Al Boyd produces.

From Kewaskum, Wisconsin, Mrs. Adolph Wahlen, inquires: "Where is Chubby Parker who, 10 years ago, sang with WLS? Also, who was the red haired young lady who appeared with the Cumberland Ridge Runners on the stage at Cedar Lake, Wisconsin, last summer?" That is Edith LaCrosse, whose titian locks are no less pleasing than her personality. Chubby Parker is no longer on the air though he is, we understand, still a resident of Chicago.

Mrs. Mae Clements of Sharpsburg, Illinois, wonders whether Jolly Joe Kelly is really as handsome as his picture on the cover page of the first WLS Weekly indicates. Yes, indeed, having communicated with the photographer in support of our own judgment, we find that the likeness is perfect. The only exception we might make is that Joe's grin is usually a bit broader.

Chicagoan Miss Frances Peerenboom is curious to know the real name of Hezzie of the Hoosier Hot Shots, and whether he's married? Hezzie was christened Paul Trietsch. And, by the way, did you know that he once was employed as a baker's assistant. Hezzie is justly proud of his abilities as a baker of pastry, cake and bread. Yes he is married, but his attractive wife does the baking now.

Miss Evelyn Brussell and twin-sister Lucille of East Towas, Michigan, want to know if Gene Autry, the Oklahoma Yodeling Cowboy, is married, and what is the name of the picture he recently made in Hollywood. Yes, Gene is married. Mrs. Autry is the former Ina Mae Spivey of Duncan, Oklahoma. They were married April 1, 1931. Gene's picture is "The Santa Fe Trail." He sang, played guitar and acted in the opus.

Time for us to be running along, friends. We've enjoyed this visit with you . . . and please do remember, if we can be of service in answering questions about your friends here at WLS, let us know. We'll be glad to help. Until next issue, then. Thanks for the hospitality. We've enjoyed it. G'bye.

# Pa Smithers at WLS

New rural sketch promises much fun for listeners.

By George C. Biggar

NOT far out of the little country village of Fairview live Silas and Sarah Smithers, better known to all of their neighbors as just plain "Pa and Ma Smithers."

The Smithers live alone, their two children having gone to the city years ago. But they're a happy pair and they enjoy life to the fullest in their own "homey," simple way. This, in spite of the fact that Ma has to keep quite a "watch-out" on Pa, who sometimes gets too "cantankerous" to suit the wishes of his better half. But Ma Smithers is a good-hearted soul, the first to burst out into tears if Pa gets the worst of anything.

You folks who listen to WLS daytime programs are going to learn to know and love Pa and Ma Smithers. We've arranged to put a "remote control" pickup out to their home near Fairview so that you can regularly listen to the humorous (and otherwise) episodes of their lives.

Mark this date down—next Monday, March 11—and tune in for "Pa and Ma" at 1:00 p. m. every day excepting Saturday and Sunday. Oh, yes, you'll meet Nellie, too. These old folks couldn't get along without her.

## Dean Boys' New Show

For the present, those fascinating fairy tales and other stories that Malcolm (Spareribs) Claire tells in the manner of a southern colored character, will be heard three days a week—at 7:45 a. m. each Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. These stories, told in such a unique way with organ effects by Ralph Waldo Emerson, have won Spareribs a great following not only among boys and girls, but even among older folks.

The Dean Boys will be heard at 7:45 a. m. on Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

Of much interest to all Boy Scouts and their fathers and mothers will be the appearance of Dwight M. Ramsay on the Little Brown Church of the Air between 9:30 and 10:15 a. m. on Sunday, March 10. Mr. Ramsay, who is Regional Executive of Boy Scout work in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan and Wisconsin, has been invited by Dr. John W. Holland to make a short talk on Scouting as it builds better citizenship among boys in all communities.

Tonight, March 9, during the National Barn Dance Hour on WLS and NBC between 8:30 and 9:30, the Old



## Little Woodsman Starred with Spareribs

ments from our listening friends prove that the WLS broadcast news service keeps folks in close touch with news just when they want it.

When Ignatius (Junior) Machewski, five years old, realized the house was too cold for his widowed mother, Mrs. Anna Machewski, he took immediate action.

With a small hatchet and a burlap sack, Junior fared forth in the neighborhood of his home in search of firewood. He strayed too far and became lost. Police found him huddled in a doorway, cold and hungry.

Junior was unable to tell them his address or his last name very clearly. It wasn't until the next day that he finally was taken home, after spending a night at the police station.

Malcolm (Spareribs) Claire heard about Junior and asked him to talk to the boys and girls who listen to his fairy tales. Junior made his air debut with Spareribs on February 27.



Junior didn't make a very long talk but he certainly was not suffering from "mike fright."

A number of listeners sent money and clothing for Junior, his mother and his nine brothers and sisters. The family is on relief and times have not been easy for them.











# MEN! Accept this AMAZING OFFER

**FULL SIZE  
50¢  
TUBE**

A Shave a Day  
for 60 Days



**YOURS  
for Only—**

**15¢  
Post Paid  
USE COUPON BELOW**

*This offer is being given only to friends and listeners of WLS through special arrangement with the manufacturer.*

We want every man to test Saf-T-Shav—to learn what real shaving comfort is like—shaving without brush, lather or greasy preparations. Saf-T-Shav is the last word in shaving cream. It is offered to you after months of careful analysis and preparation in the laboratories of the Hamlins Wizard Oil Company—known to WLS listeners for its Hamlins Wizard Oil (Wizard Oil).

Saf-T-Shav takes the fight out of tough whiskers.

Saf-T-Shav makes shaving a pleasure.

Saf-T-Shav is a two-purpose cream—you don't need a face lotion after shaving.

Saf-T-Shav is greaseless, brushless, quick-acting and soothing.

Saf-T-Shav is everything you've always wanted in a shaving cream.

Men! Don't pass up this amazing offer! Act today!

And, now, a word to the ladies. Want to give your husband or son something he'll really appreciate? Then clip this coupon and send for your tube of Saf-T-Shav today!

SAF-T-SHAV IS SOLD IN DRUG STORES

Hamlins **SAF-T-SHAV** Brushless

*Max Dulman*

HARRISON PUTNAM  
REKONSHA NICH  
M 3-37

**MAIL THIS COUPON TODAY**

Hamlins Wizard Oil Co.,  
230 W. Huron St.,  
Chicago, Ill.

This coupon is worth 35¢ to you. Enclose 15¢ and receive, postpaid, the full-sized 50¢ tube of SAF-T-SHAV (only one tube to an individual).

Name .....

Address .....

City ..... State .....

(This Offer Expires April 1, 1935)