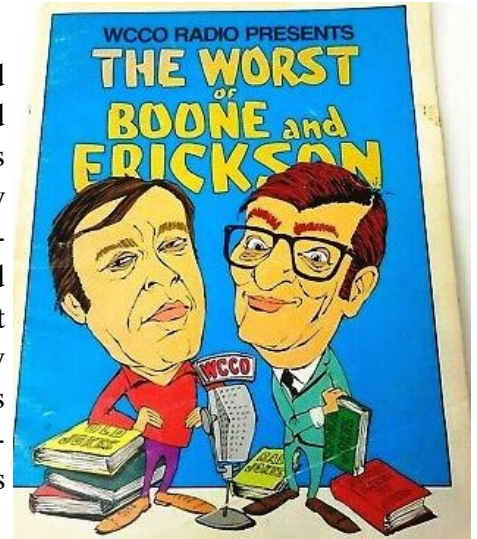


I was asked once who were some of the influences of my radio career and I would answer that I had a few. I always thought that the two best interviewers I listened to were Charlie Boone from WCCO and Johnny Carson. Their interview style was something that I tried to emulate over the years. Both were very good at not only being prepared, but to go off script from prepared questions by being conversational. In listening to answers that people would give me in interviews, it would undoubtedly give me the next question. Growing up listening to WCCO when it was the top rated station in the country, they had several who were very professional in what they did. Roger Erickson's comedic style for radio was something I tried to emulate. I've written before about Dick Chapman, a newsman at the big 8-3-OH. His closing of newscasts is where I got the name for this column as he always ended with; That's the latest, Dick Chapman, WCCO.



I always enjoyed Steve Cannon. He was a ventriloquist of sorts but being on radio, he moved his lips. His characters Morgan Mundane, Ma Linger and Backlash LaRue were legendary. David Letterman surprisingly was an influence of mine. When I lived in Sioux City in the 90's, Letterman's Home Office was located there. City Hall had the sign in their window. You may recall he was well known for his Top Ten lists. I would do top 5 or 10 lists quite often with stories about agriculture. There was a news story one day that a farmer in Illinois was raking hay with a Farmall H tractor and a New Holland side rake. It seemed that the farmer hit a hole in the field and somehow was bounced off the tractor which kept going up and over a county road and through fences and the neighbor's cornfield and finally stopping about two miles away when it hit a tree.

My morning radio co-host Gary Erickson and I came up with the top five things we learned from this incident.
Number 5:

The fuel efficiency of the Farmall H is better than advertised.

#4: Those new tires really do grip going up and down ditches and through fences.

#3: That New Holland side rake really makes long straight windrows.

#2: Those spring steel tines on the rake held up to the test with not a one being broken or even bent.

And the #1 thing we learned: Three foot high growing corn can be raked!

In the radio farm department we had the top five rules for living on the farm.

#5: Never chip, chop or scrape frozen manure with your mouth open.

#4: Never let a farm dog lick you in the face.

#3: Never question anyone yelling 'Run For It!'

#2: Never assume a frozen manure pile will hold your weight.

#1: Never tie yourself to a rope halter or vice versa.

There was a story one day about an elementary school teacher in Michigan who bet his 232 students they couldn't read 7000 books total in the month of March. If they did, he would eat some worms. Well the kids outdid themselves and read over 7000 books in a month. The teacher boiled 4 worms in lemon juice and salt in front of the class and ate them. The teacher was quoted as saying "Really, worms have as much protein as a T-bone steak, without the gristle." With this story we came up with this top 10 list of problems using worms instead of cows.

#10: It's hard to keep them from falling through the grill when barbecuing.

#9: Difficult to brand.

#8: Cattle drives are very slow.

#7: Ranch hands keep fishing with livestock.

#6: 'Ride'em wormboy!

#5: Itty bitty lassos are hard to manage.

#4: Milking is a real challenge.

#3: Can't find A-1 wormsauce.

#2: No matter how many you buy, there are never enough ribs to go around.

#1: Early birds are a constant threat.

Roy Smith was an ag educator at the University of Nebraska teaching agricultural marketing. He developed grain marketing strategies for farmers and he was a market researcher, broadcaster and writer being a frequent contributor to Successful Farming magazine. I conducted several radio interviews with him over the years. Roy was the one who came up with the trading term 'dead cat bounce'. It's a point in time where the grain market prices have gone about as low as they can go so they have to rebound. Roy said if you drop a dead cat far enough, it'll bounce. Roy came up with 30 Murphy's Laws for grain traders. The dead cat bounce was one of the 30.

Here are my 10 favorite Murphy's Laws for Grain Traders.

#10: Everyone has a trading strategy that won't work.

#9: The market is not logical; it's psychological.

#8: If you feel like doubling up a profitable position, slam your dialing finger in the drawer until the feeling goes away.

#7: When it comes to luck or skill, you can't beat luck. (That's true in golf too)

#6: The perfect strategy works every time until you start using it.

#5: The best way to make a small fortune is to start with a large one.

#4: If your strategy seems to be working well, you haven't been using it long enough.

#3: He who knows doesn't tell, he who tells doesn't know.

#2: If you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you've always got.

#1: The first five letters of 'broker' spell 'broke'.

And finally my favorite ‘Top 5’ list, my favorite short Ole and Lina jokes.

#5: Ole sees a letter lying on his doormat and on the envelope it says DO NOT BEND. Ole spends the next 2 hours trying to figure out how to pick it up.

#4: An Italian tourist asked Ole why scuba divers always fall backwards off their boats. Ole said ‘vell if they fell forwards, they’d still be in the boat’.

#3: Lars tells Ole that Christmas is on Friday this year. Ole says I hope it’s not the 13th!

#2: Ole shouts frantically into the phone, “My wife Lena is pregnant and her contractions are only two minutes apart!” “Is this her first child?” asks the Doctor. “NO!” he shouts, “this is her husband Ole”.

#1: Ole and Sven find three grenades, and they decide to take them to a police station. Sven says ‘What if one explodes before we get there?’ Ole says “We’ll lie and say we only found two.”

As mentioned earlier in this column, the Late Show with David Letterman, had their fictitious home office in Sioux City, Iowa. From 1991-1995, my family happened to live in Sioux City so we went to visit City Hall, which had real signs for a fake office.

