

Contact: Wendy Voelker, 518-312-0562
wendymvoelker@gmail.com

Jack Keenan Christmas Special to Get Final Airing

Known as “Mr. Old Time Radio”, Jack Keenan brought his love of old time radio and his gift of gab to radio listeners in the Capital Region for nearly three decades, both on WMHT’s R.I.S.E. radio service for the print-disabled, and with his annual Christmas show that aired on commercial radio. “The Jack Keenan Christmas Special” aired on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day in the Albany radio market for 29 years beginning in 1981. The show aired on 810 WGY from 1981-2007, and the final two years (2008 and 2009) aired on Talk 1300 WGDJ-AM. Keenan passed away on November 13, 2014, but his Christmas special will live on as it receives one final “airing” this Christmas season.

Wendy Voelker, former producer of “The Don Weeks Show” on WGY, produced the “Jack Keenan Christmas Special” from 2000-2009 and will be releasing the final two shows on her website just in time for Christmas this year, as her tribute to her friend Jack Keenan. Voelker now resides outside Cleveland, Ohio.

The show had hundreds of guests over its 29-year run, including local elected officials (Congressman Paul Tonko and NYS Assemblyman Jim Tedisco each appeared multiple times), Albany-area media personalities (including Jack Aernecke, Ernie Tetrault, Susan Arbetter, Benita Zahn, Elisa Streeter, and Liz Bishop); Bishop Howard J. Hubbard of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany; and Radio Hall of Famer Fred Foy, who was the voice of “The Lone Ranger” radio series and made a guest appearance every year on the show. Special guests over the show’s run included New York Governor George Pataki, Mrs. Silda Wall Spitzer, and legendary crooner Perry Como.

Jack enjoyed “reminiscing” with his guests, inviting them to share their personal Christmas memories (and sometimes family recipes) with listeners. Those conversations were the heart of the shows, interspersed with clips from the Golden Days of Radio, classic holiday music, inspirational messages, and lively banter between Jack Keenan and his longtime announcer Gil Roy. The show had two airings each year – one on the afternoon of Christmas Eve, and the other on Christmas morning. 2009 was the last year that the show was able to find a home on the Capital Region airways, ending a remarkable 29-year run.

“My experience producing the Jack Keenan Christmas Special was a holiday tradition for me for ten years, and even longer for Capital Region families,” said Ms. Voelker. “Jack had always hoped his Christmas Special could have aired for that 30th year, and this is my way of honoring his wish. I am thankful to have been Jack’s friend, and I’m glad I have the opportunity to share the show with Jack’s listeners again.”

The show will be presented in eight individual episodes - each hour from the final two years of the show, 2008 and 2009. Each hour of the show will be posted separately, and listeners can listen online or conveniently download episodes to their devices using their favorite podcast app or reader.

The episodes will be available beginning on Monday, December 22 at www.wendalicious.com. The podcast feed direct URL is <http://feeds.feedburner.com/WendaliciousPodcast>.