

SATELLITE NEWS

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MST3K Enters Next Generation

When the lights dim on the sets of *Mystery Science Theater 3000* after taping show #512 ("Mitchell") this June, the page will turn, the egg timer will flip, and a new chapter in the show's history will begin. Our own Joel Hodgson will step down from his time-honored role as the sleepy-eyed yet indomitable Joel Robinson of *MST3K*. And in a brand new role as the Mad Scientists' captive human audience, show #512 will also introduce our own head writer and uncanny character genius Michael J. Nelson.

Joel's decision to pass the jumpsuit was a tough one. "I'm grateful to all the Misties for all the ongoing support and input," he said, "but I see it as important to my own creative ecology, to start dedicating more of my time to creating new shows, pop trends and inventions." His plans include working on *MST3K* in behind-the-scenes roles.

Joel, who has charmed audiences in his role for over 100 shows, said the show will go on. He said he expects *MST3K*, like "Star Trek," to have a long, long life and continue to grow in popularity. "I'll be very happy if, in the future, I'll be remem-



Hodgson is passing the celebrated red jumpsuit to head writer Nelson.

bered as the Gene Roddenberry of *MST3K*, and it's first Captain Kirk."

Most of you Misties already are fans of Mr. Nelson, and Best Brains is very excited to make him a regular in the show. Mike's musical compositions and arrangements are a staple of the show, his sense of humor as head writer is stand-out drop-dead hilarious, and his many guest spots are legendary. Take a look at the vibrant Jack Perkins, the apocalyptic Hugh Beaumont, the feisty Glenn Manning, the savage HoloClown, the classic Michael Feinstein, the simpering Morrissey, the beefy Steve Reeves, the whimsical Torgo, the buoyant John Banner and so many more; behind the makeup, the mannerisms and the mayhem is our Mike. Mike's a family man now, a new dad: he and his wife welcomed their cute little

baby boy into this world last month.

The writers, the staff, heck, all the folks at Best Brains are excited about the transition, and viewers can look for some new twists and turns. But the things which are sure not to change are the warmth, the wit and the edge which have made *MST3K* famous. We here at Best Brains are proud to have had Joel in his seminal role on screen, and we look forward to great things from him in the future. And we hope that our fans across the country will give Mike a warm welcome. He's bound to be a little uneasy, what with the big shoes to fill and all, so we ask you to help him along, and not call him names or throw spitballs at him, or bring up the fact that many years ago his old girlfriend stole his keyboard.

How will it happen? What will Mike's new character be? Will the 'bots love him? How will the Mads torture him? What will happen to Joel Robinson?

Please now, what's life without a few surprises? Just be sure not to miss shows #512 and #513 later this year, and keep watching the skies! **KEEP WATCHING THE SKIES!**

(Hey kids, grown-ups, semanticists! See if you can bust this issue of Tommy Servo's Encryptogram. It's fun, it's literary and it's a mess! Send your best guesses in to me and let's see how wrong you can be. Next month: Spiders, all over my brain!)

Malapropriatims

Without bingeing into eschatology, let's resign some of the abhorrent malapropriatims we might proffer around the housestead. Oftener than might otherhow be regaled as lucrative, suffix it to say that the debauchery of my mother's tongue is abstemious to yours lightly. None perchance but the postpriand author Mrs. Pynchon or illiterature's Irish potato Mr. Joyce DeWitt might in our lifespan hand out bon bons encased in such snappy reportage. Irregardless of the penperson's porcinity toward one of the many genders at his or her insinkerator, it is only the reprehensible autarch who avoids dribbling down the road to incontinence.

I display my welts when I join in the rejoinder that it is the continents which should hold the rain over the heads of the various stylistic genders, not the genders who will inimacably hurl the books out with their baby's water. I abhor young procreators to find those constructs which propel them to the sort of lurid prosenesses which will impale their readers. Erstwhile, it droves into what this present exhibition is, to paraquote the Bore: "It is a story some jerk told me, a lotta hooley, don't mean much."



AH... BASEBALL



by Paul Chaplin, Writer

Ah baseball. What shall be this spring's baseball fable?

Um..... One day many years ago I was given to understand that my loving Grandma and I were headed off to Wrigley Field to see the Cubs. I was five years old. So Grandma had all the power and we ended up at a movie – "The Unsinkable Molly Brown," with Debbie Reynolds.


Maybe there was a rain-out, I don't know. Anyway, I enjoyed "The Unsinkable Molly Brown." But there was tension in the film. That worried me. Maybe things will turn out bad, I thought, just like a Cubs game could. (Boy, could *those* turn out bad!)

The scene that stuck with me (from the movie) was a helpless baby girl in a tiny wicker basket, being swept down a raging mountain stream. I guess I remembered that because, well, I saw myself as that baby girl. I think you all know what I mean.

I mean *helpless*, rocked by forces beyond my control, a creature of pity in a hostile world – hey, just like the Cubs!

And that's my point. For too long I lived my life as a Cub. I was not captain of my own fate. I charted not my own destiny.


Anyway now I do and kids, my point is, you don't have to be the Cubs. Nuts to the Cubs. Do the things that you wanna do.

That's Lou Reed. You can be Lou Reed if you want. 

The Magic, the Mystery that IS Circle Pines by Mary Jo Pehl, Writer


"Circle Pines will do that to you." "On the banks of Circle Pines." "Circle Pines." So go a few comments made by Joel, Crow and Servo in MST's upcoming fifth season. So what about Circle Pines?

I'm Mary Jo Pehl, and I am the newest writer on the MST3K staff (as of a year ago!). Circle Pines, MN, population 4,758, is the town where I was bored and bred.

 Circle Pines was begun by a couple of idealistic farmers who wanted an egalitarian, co-operative community. The name comes from the symbol for a co-operative, consisting of three pine trees in a circle. Hence, Circle Pines. Not funny – but true. The weekly newspaper chronicling life and death and garbage collection is called the Circulating Pines. Peculiar and true.

When I was growing up in Circle Pines, most of the houses were identical – neat, small, cottage-like dwellings. This quasi-socialist existence was splendid until Bud Hansen franchised a Dairy Queen, and his ice-milk empire crumbled the foundations of our brave new

world called Circle Pines.


 My father was mayor of Circle Pines in the early sixties. Being a member of such a high profile political family wasn't easy, but it had its benefits. As the First Family, we got to ride in the Fourth of July parade. There were nine of us all together (not just because we were Catholic, but because Daddy, the political mastermind that he was, knew that one day we'd all be registered voters).

Anyway, it was difficult for all of us to ride in the back of a convertible unless we stacked ourselves three high, so we simply rode in the back of a moving van. Which was roomy, indeed, but hot and stuffy as there were no windows. And it rendered useless throwing candy to the throngs of Circle Pinites (Pineses? Pinians?), unless you were willing to risk a Jolly Rancher ricocheting off the walls of the van and poking an eye out.

But even through such pomp and circumstances, the grand experiment that was Circle Pines was disintegrating. Lee and Iris and

their Bar and Grill came to town wielding their one-pound Battleship Burgers; and in their wake came Candy King's Dance Studio, Carol's Calico Kitchen, and a fire station with a giant Snoopy painted on the side, wearing a fire helmet and brandishing a firehose.

And so, Circle Pines did not become the triumph of the working class. It has been subsumed into suburbia, complete with socio-economic strata; and replete with a theme housing development called Sherwood Forest Estates. Ironically, all the houses in Sherwood Forest Estates are identical, and they are found on such streets as Maid Marian Lane, Friar Tuck Blvd., and Robin Hood Ave.

 I don't live there anymore; Daddy was ousted from power in an ugly political coup. Some analysts say it was because he didn't run for re-election. Myself, I have sought political asylum in Minneapolis.

Circle Pines, Minnesota, 55014. Your town. Our town. Anytown, USA. Now you know.

MST3K SING-A-LONG

FEATURING:

"WHAT A PLEASANT JOURNEY"

Here's the lyrics to a train song Joel and the 'bots composed after watching Show #509 "The Girl in Lover's Lane." Watch for it later this season, and feel free to sing along!

I hear that train a comin',
comin' 'round the hill
I think that is my train, but I'd better check my
scheduill

Ooops, I thought it was the train to Appleton,
but it's going to Circle Pines

Well I've got about twenty minutes to kill,
good thing I brought some magazines.

Been riding on this old train,
been riding it all night
Think I'll go to the club car
and get me a bite

Mmmm, this tuna melt sandwich
really tastes quite nice
Plus it comes with cole slaw and a pickle and I
must say it's reasonably priced.

The five fifteen from Duluth,
oh my it's just derailed
The toxic waste is spilling,
the conductor's been impaled
A Benzine cloud has risen
and the whole town's startin' to cough
Within a matter of days,
all of our skin will fall off.

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A
Filmography
of Richard
Basehart

by Gypsy
with a hat
tip to
"Cinemanía"

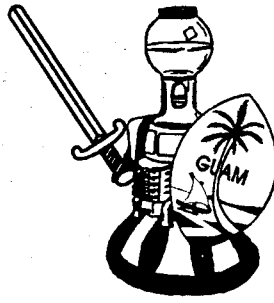


Richard Basehart (1914 - 1984)

- 1947 Cry Wolf
- 1947 Repeat Performance
- 1948 He Walked By Night
- 1949 Reign of Terror
- 1949 Roseanna McCoy
- 1949 Tension
- 1950 Outside the Wall
- 1951 Fixed Bayonets
- 1951 Fourteen Hours
- 1951 The House on Telegraph Hill
- 1951 Decision Before Dawn
- 1951 *Married actress Valentina Cortese*
- 1953 La Mano dello Straniero
- 1953 Titanic
- 1954 Avanzi di Galera
- 1954 The Good Die Young
- 1954 La Strada
- 1955 Il Bidone
- 1955 Canyon Crossroads
- 1955 La Vena d'Oro
- 1956 Finger of Guilt
- 1956 Moby Dick
- 1957 Arrivederci Dimas
- 1957 Time Limit
- 1958 The Brothers Karamazov
- 1959 Jons und Erdme
- 1960 5 Branded Women
- 1960 For the Love of Mike
- 1960 Portrait in Black
- 1960 Visa to Canton
- 1962 Hitler
- 1962 The Savage Guns
- 1963 Kings of the Sun
- 1964 Four Days in November
- 1965 The Satan Bug
- 1972 Chato's Land
- 1972 Rage
- 1973 And Millions Will Die
- 1975 The Terror of Dr. Chancey
- 1977 The Island of Dr. Moreau
- 1977 Shenanigans
- 1979 Being There
- 1981 Bix

The Sixteen Trillion Names of Tom Servo

by Bond Furball



(In this episode, we find Prince Tom Servo and his hard rubber servile autonimoid and valet, Puncho, aboard the derelict trans-galactic spacepod "Reverend Ronald Knox." Having escaped the dreaded armies of the menacing Count Deckhead Rivets, Prince Tom and Puncho have commandeered the "Reverend Ronald Knox" and its precious cargo of detective novels destined for chip stores throughout the galaxy. Prince Tom has found that the plots of these very same detective novels carry a highly virulent form of The Pox, which can only be cured by boiling the patient until he or she is dead. Armed with this terrible knowledge and on the lam from Count Rivets, Prince Servo is hotfooting it back to his home planet, the Galactic Capital, Wisconsin.)

Taking a much-needed rest period out of petty cash, Prince Tom reclined in the simmering mud-oil baths of the captain's chambers.

"Man oh Manos, if this doesn't take the Dutch out of Holland..."

Suddenly the klaxon sounded. Arooo! Arooo! "That things louder than a randy cat!" cried Tom.

"It's a breach," Puncho hollered above the din, "in berth four. The berth has been breached!"

"I can't hear you above the din," yelled Tom. "Stop standing on the din and it won't yell so loud."

"This is no time for puns, Prince Ron."

"It's Don!" Tom retorted, but it was too late to correct himself, the bulkhead by the berth was breached with a blistering blue blight, bircing the bix-inch bar-mored beel blate.

"Nerts," bellowed Tom, "Guests, and me dripping Bardhal all over the floor."

"Save your cheekery for the Cleveland Bone, Don Pardo!" A voice boomed in through the breached berth. "Prepare to be boarded."

"It's Tom Servo, and I'm only prepared to be bored, Mister Count Deckhead Rivets!" Prince Tom replied snappily.

"Don't get Snappy, Tom. You haven't the juice." Suddenly, through the breached berth, feet

first, came the massive carriage of the great and most evil Count Deckhead Rivets. Stepping out of his massive carriage he sneered at the two. His evilness permeated the cabin like the smell of room temperature Stilton and old pancake batter. "So," croaked the evil count, "I've got you, Yan Stenerud. You and that little rubber chew-toy you call a valet."

"It's Tom Servo, and you couldn't catch a re-run of MASH if your wife depended on it, Deckhead."

"What did you call me?"

"Deckhead."

"Deckhead?"

"Yes, Deckhead, as in Deckhead Rivets."

"That's right, Deckhead. That is your name isn't it?"

"Whose name?"

"Wait a minute. Who's talking here?"

Having confused the count with a series of questionably attributed dialogue, Prince Tom and his trusty valet were able to slip through a hole in the plot which remained open just long enough for them to make their way to the airlock where an escape drone waited.

"What luck!" Tom beamed, "I'll never criticize my narrator again. Quick, faithful Puncho, activate the drone."

"Too late, my prince. The wolves are at the gate!" Before Puncho could explain the metaphor, the

cheery glow of a helium laser blast started to cut through the airlock hatch. Simultaneously, the air began to fill with a nitric acid cloud, the lights went out, a Perji Snot lizard was released, and Mac Davis' "I Believe in Music" began playing at a deafening volume.

"A bit of bad luck, friend Puncho. What have we to defend ourselves?"

"Nothing in here but an old footlocker, my liege."

The laser beam was one half to two-thirds through its cutting job, the nitric acid was eating away at the drone's control system, the Perji Snot lizard was leaving a disgusting trail of deadly mucus in their path, and the two heroes learned that music is the universal language and love is the key.

"Check the footlocker, Puncho!"

"Alas my prince, all we have here is a Shakespeare two-piece fishing rod with a spinning reel, a fully equipped tackle box, a giant jar of Tang and seven petotiod bombs designed to punch little cactus-shaped stencils in plywood."

Prince Tom's little dome hummed softly as he molded an idea out of the pure ether. "Not to worry, my rubbery mendicant. Swallow the bombs, spread the Tang on the floor and rig me up a Hula Popper. I have a plan."

Moments later, as Mac Davis reached the last chorus, the heavy airlock hatch was thrown aside and the armies of Count Deckhead Rivets charged. The count laughed his famous cackley laugh, which sounds like a cough if you don't know him.

"Prepare to meet your maker, Old Stewball."

"It's TOM SERVO! Plaster your fats, you cyst with hair and teeth. I've met my maker and we're really good pals! Enjoy the light refreshing taste of Death!"

(Be with us next time as we jump ahead and find Prince Tom in a deadly game of cat-and-mouse with special guest star Anne Francis in the twentieth installment of The Umpteen Trillion Names of Tom Servo!)

Quoting Shakespeare -- The Right Way

by Mike "Shakespeare" Nelson, Head Writer

It's no secret around Best Brains that I'm the Shakespeare expert having seen or been in over three productions of "The Immortal Bard's"* works.

"You know," Kevin Murphy might say, which is typical of Kevin, "this spot in the film could use a Shakespeare reference."

"Right," cries Mary Jo Pehl (a little overzealous, I thought) and the wheels are set in motion. I'm called for immediately and within seconds, there sits a plump Shakespeare reference right in the middle of "Teenagers From Outer Space" for generations of viewers to laugh at and maybe, just maybe, learn from.

Lately, I've felt the burden. I'm a little tired. In a recent writing session, I suggested the quote "If it t'were done when 'tis done, than t'were well it were done quickly," as a brittle and sophisticated comment on contemporary social views. But my heart wasn't in it. Later it

became clear that "Look her lips," would have served the moment, and because no one questioned, the audience was cheated, I was heartbroken, and "The Crusty Old Oxfordian Landowner's"* reputation suffered. Everybody lost.

I suggest a change. Why not make your own Shakespearean references? There are countless reasons not to, but there are also several vaguely compelling reasons to dust off that copy of "Lord Chamberlayne's Whisper-Thin Playwright Friend's"* complete works that you failed to return your senior year. Here are some helpful suggestions to get you started.

1) Don't quote from "Pericles, Prince of Tyre."

2) Choose meaty quotes and leave the bones to the scholars. Drop the quote "Life is but a walking shadow, a poor player who struts and frets his hour upon the stage and then is heard no more," at a party and you'll be nuzzled by

college sophomores, but even a whisper of Coriolanus' "O my son, my son! thou are preparing fire for us; look thee, here's water to quench it," and I wouldn't be surprised if they took your cup and barred you from the keg.

3) Stick with the histories and tragedies. Some of those romances and comedies can get pretty goofy. (Remember even the much praised "A Midsummer-Night's Dream" is loaded with fairies, among them --- Mustardseed and Peaseblossom!)

4) Quote the biggies: Iago, Mac and Lady Mac, Hamlet, Lear, etc. Stay the hell away from Young Siward, Peter of Pomfret, Simple, and especially Seyton. The man's an idiot.

5) Don't pull from "Timon of Athens," unless it's a damn good fit.

Special Bonus Hint: The comedies aren't funny.

**Shakespeare*

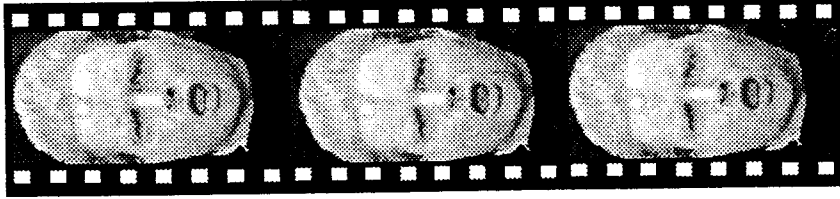
Life of an Editor

by Tim Scott, Technical Supervisor

"He wears those pants every day," I thought to myself as I sat at the window watching my neighbor with the fake leg walk across the parking lot of my South Minneapolis apartment. Sitting in my smelly T-shirt and stained boxer shorts after a fuzzy night of despair, I was waiting. This is what it comes down to most days. Staring out the window, watching life go by, watching all those people with real jobs drive by. Walk by. Laughing. Carrying on as they saunter past, change jingling in their pockets. Financial security spilling over their lips with every breath. Some days seem to take a lifetime to go by. Time drags on when you're broke. To keep your sanity you end up doing things like burning yourself with a curling iron on the upper inside portion of your thigh, just to see how much pain you can take before you pass out. The depression of being out of work is amplified by the result of a nightly diet of cheap beer and greasy

sausage pizza, breath commonly known in the industry as "Struggling Freelance Editors Breath." The mail person takes forever when you're waiting for that unemployment check or a freelance check that was supposed to be here yesterday. You learn to hate them. I think they know that. That's why they never stop for a moment to chat. Too afraid that you'll yell at them and blame them for your girlfriend leaving you and the bank taking away your car and the cops always hassling you about walking over to the Super America in your underwear late at night and striking up conversation with Lance the assistant night manager. So they just drop the mail and hurry on their way. Filthy cowards. My lips are very chapped. I never answer the phone. Screen 'em all, hoping that the next will be a call from an employer that actually thinks I'm worth something ... anything. I'm hungry. I should bathe my bed sores.

This is an excerpt from the critically acclaimed novel "My Chair by the Window-- My Bad Breath," written by Tim Scott during a year-long brush with freelance video editing.



Scraped from the Cutting Room Floor

by TV's Frank

When the talk turns to major TV actors of the last quarter century, Monte Markham inevitably gets neglected. His work on "The Second Hundred Years" is all but forgotten. His stint on the TV version of "Mr. Deeds Goes to Town" is never mentioned. His performance as "The New Perry Mason" is an open secret that no one dares talk about. His guest appearances on countless episodic TV shows are always taken for granted. Why? Why is this hardworking professional never given the respect he deserves?

Is it that Monte Markham lacks charisma? Let's put it this way: he's not exactly a Humphrey Bogart or a Jack Nicholson. But did Humphrey Bogart ever do a "Barnaby Jones" guest shot? Did Jack Nicholson ever tackle a short-lived sitcom? I think I've made my point.

And has Monte Markham ever been in anything he wasn't good in? Absolutely not! Whenever I show people a Monte Markham tape, I'll inevitably get the same passionate response: "Oh, that guy."

Okay, so maybe he never starred in a series that lasted more than one season. Maybe his name never makes it on the critic's list when the awards are being handed out. So he doesn't have a fan club and there's no cult built around him. But if Steven J. Cannell needs a ruggedly handsome FBI agent, or Aaron Spelling needs a respectable-looking businessman type, or a bus and truck company of "Same Time Next Year" is about to hit the road, then Monte Markham is there for the job.

He's no less talented than other actors, it's just that he can't sit back and relax like the David Hartmanns, the Ted Shackelfords and the Lee Majors'. There's no big syndication deal for Monte. After all his years in TV he still has to sit by the phone and hope that there will be another episodic guest shot before next month's rent is due.

So please, give Monte Markham his due. Don't take him for granted. I think Monte himself put it best. He was starring in Some Made for TV Movie. I can't remember the title, but his character turned to another character and said...well, I can't remember what he said, but whatever it was, it sums up Monte Markham.

Fun Facts

* MST3K's 5th season premieres on July 17th with the original "Hercules."

* There will be 24 new shows this season, and we tape year-round.

* Our Info Club has over 25,000 members (and keeps growing).

* Every letter written to the club is read by our staff.

* This edition's merchandise form has a money-saving summer gift pack.

* Comedy Central's prime time schedule is printed in USA Today and in most metropolitan editions of TV Guide.

* Best Brains cannot sell VHS copies of the show, but hopes to in the future.

* Some of our writing staff continue to perform stand-up on local stages.

Mystery Science Theater 3000
SATELLITE NEWS/Best Brains, Inc.
P.O. Box 5325
Hopkins, MN 55343
USA

MEMBER # →

Members: Be sure to send us information regarding a change of your address.