

March 17, 2011 Regular Council Meeting
Comments by Council Member Carpenter

The Payson Main Street Guild, in cooperation with the Payson Classical Music Association, Inc. (a 501 (c) 3 corporation) are proud to bring to the cool pines of Payson, Arizona its first ever FILM FESTIVAL! July 15th and 16th (Friday and Saturday).

“Long Time Payson Resident Remembered”

by Bill Sahnno



Some time ago, Payson resident, Jack Monschein, accompanied by a friend, ventured well beyond the bounds of Payson, a thing he seldom did, to attend a meeting of DPS retirees at his old Headquarters site_20thAve. and Encanto in Phoenix. As the retired former DPS Officer with 24 years of service stated, “this is the first time I have returned to the DPS Headquarters in 30 years”

Originally from Staunton, Illinois, Monschein served with the Navy during World War II and after a few years with Standard Oil, was hired in 1951 by the Arizona Highway Patrol as a dispatcher. For 24 years he worked his way through the ranks of AHP/DPS. His service was all in the field of communications. Working with AT&T and Mountain Bell, Monschein brought the police teletype to the state in the late 1950's. Through his efforts, the National Law Enforcement Teletype Switching (NLETS) Center was located in Phoenix, where it remains today. For this achievement in law enforcement communications, Monschein was presented the Distinguished Service Award in 1966.

In a letter dated 9 May 1997, NLETS President James Martin wrote: “Although I have never had the pleasure of meeting you, I as president of NLETS, have been given the honor of notifying you that you have been elected to the NLETS Hall of Fame.”

Martin explained that the NLETS Hall of Fame had been created in 1996 in order to permanently acknowledge those individuals who, over the years, had contributed to the creation and growth of the national network. The new board of directors selected a Veterans Committee to go to work and identify the nation’s most notable contributors to law enforcement telecommunications advances and finally narrowed the field to 78. Monschein and three others were elected to the NLETS Hall of Fame.

Monschein says the first switching room was about 24 feet long by 16 feet wide. Coincidentally, one of the men primarily responsible for designing and installing the cabinet was Clayton Ricker of Strawberry, a retired AT&T network manager. “We built the units at the Western Electric plant on Indian School Road in Phoenix,” Ricker said. “Then we tested it, perfected it and finally moved it to Monschein’s office at the highway patrol.”

And today, says Monschein the entire control center is housed in a small box.

During his years with the highway patrol, Monschein continued to supervise the improvements made in the communications department. He made his way up the ladder, with promotions to sergeant, then lieutenant and spent his last 12 years with the department as a major.

“At that time, I was in charge of all the communications statewide for the department,” he said. “I had seven dispatch centers and I used to travel quite a bit. I had to try to visit those sites at least once a week. I had a total of about 89 dispatchers statewide at one time.”

Monschein thought he’d been forgotten long ago. “Imagine.....after all those years,” he mused, “I’m almost (but not quite) speechless.”

The Hall of Fame induction ceremony and banquet was held in Chicago on the Fourth of July, 1997 and a framed copy of a 1997 newspaper article hangs on his wall along with an enviable collection of his personal DPS badges collected over the years.

Monschein retired from the DPS in 1975, but remained active in the Rim Country. He was elected as a town council member in 1976, served for six months and became town manager, serving in that capacity until his second retirement in 1990. Not one for an idle lifestyle, he made another entry into public service, again, as a town council member and served his final public service tour from 1996-2000.

Reflecting on his service as Payson’s Town Manager, Monschein offers some interesting observations:

- **“As Town Manager my annual salary was \$8400.”**
- **“I can remember when we had only one policeman (no volunteers), one Fireman (with volunteers) and a dogcatcher.”**
- **“We had only one stoplight at 260 and 87.”**
- **“In 1976 we had only 19 town employees, we now have over 160.”**
- **“We had 90 miles of dedicated town roads and 85% of them were dirt.”**
- **“Under Mayor Taylor’s tenure, during 1977 we began a 3year program to chip and seal all town roads. That Program was completed during 1980 (doing 30 mi per year) and paid for in cash.”**
- **“Our fiscal policy during my tenure was cash and carry. If we couldn’t afford we didn’t obligate for it.”**
- **“We started our first town employee medical benefit program during the early ‘80’s.”**
- **“We did not own our water company until we purchased one from United Utilities during the early ‘80’s. We went into debt for the first time by doing so and absorbed the company’s employees into the town staff.”**
- **“We implemented the 1st employee retirement plan during the mid ‘80’s.”**
- **“We initiated no Bond Issues. We operated a cash and carry fiscal policy.”**
- **“We built the first town hall during 1978, a 5,000 sqft facility, at \$23/sqft. Paid for in cash.”**
- **“In 1976 the population of Payson was about 2800 and when I retired during 1991 it was approximately 12,000.”**



Jack Monschein, Navy veteran, former DPS Officer, Payson Town Manager and member of the Town Council, was one of only four nationwide to be elected to the National Law Enforcement Telecommunications Systems Hall of Fame. When running for town council one of jacks flyers advertised him as being dependable, reliable, candid and honest, a man of integrity. And indeed, by a record of his deeds, that is true. No Jack, you are not forgotten and you will always, fondly, be remembered as a part of our town's legacy. We appreciate you and your contributions to country and community. We wish you "*Fair Winds and Following Seas*"



Semper Fi Mate!



*Bill Sakna
Colonel, U. S. Marine Corps (Ret)*