

Radio Traffic Court Material Aid In Safety Campaign

Judge's 'Guests' On 'Amateur Hour' Broadcast Alibis

By Joe Custer

RADIO'S strangest "amateur hour"

In which the "master of ceremonies" can put you in jail

Where "guest artists" accept "invitations" with reluctance

And where "awards" are apt to be (1) compulsory schooling, (2) temporary restraint of freedom, (3) loss of money or (4) any of these combinations

Such is the "amateur hour" conducted over the San Jose (Calif.) radio station each Monday afternoon, a feature that in a year's time has captured the interest of a vast Western audience

It emanates from the inner recesses of the grim two-story, red brick building that is the City Hall. On the first floor, directly above the basement prison, is the police court—and radio's strange program of amateur "talent" is enacted before His Honor, the Police Judge!

BUT if the official bench is forbidding, His Honor appears anything but. Tall, lean, athletic—he played football and rugby at Santa Clara University, and he holds his own today with the city's best handball artists—Judge Percy O'Connor's Irish blue eyes twinkle down at his "guests" on the program.

He is soft-voiced and sympathetic, but he can be firm and severe.

He is conducting his "Traffic Court of the Air," in which actual cases are broadcast. Thousands listen, as letters to the station indicate, and in his files Judge O'Connor has hundreds of communications seeking information, second-guessing his decisions, or offering illustrations of how this novel presentation proved of benefit.

It is a ticklish spot for the judge, this broadcasting. There is no recalling of verdicts or words, and thousands judge the judge as they are gathered about their radios.

The visitor crowds his way into a congested courtroom, filled principally with "performers" who



Speeders and other traffic violators receive emphatic warning from the unique police court broadcast at San Jose, Calif., conducted daily by Police Judge Percy O'Connor. Judge O'Connor, shown at his courtroom microphone, conducts an "amateur hour" that is bringing results in cutting down San Jose's traffic violations.

well the fundamental law of radio: "No dead spots!"

HE MOVES the conversation along briskly, and he keeps the air lanes humming. He gives his unseen audience a show while he dispenses justice, and his program has rapidly grown to become a leading "best seller."

He is not without a keen sense of humor, and he loses few opportunities to capitalize on an opening that results in a chuckle or two.

The witness, charged with speeding, a third offense, has been

drives the message home, not only to the accused, but to the thousands listening in.

It is the opportunity to reach an unlimited audience that makes Judge O'Connor's "Traffic Court of the Air" fulfill his purpose—to make people "Safety Conscious."

The program is fundamentally for educational purposes, and the trick of capturing widespread interest lies in the judge's ability to provide some semblance of enter-

tainment, paving the way for the messages he endeavors to convey. Whether the ordeal of magnified publicity is especially trying to his "guests" or not, Judge O'Connor is unconcerned; if the publicity makes them more careful in the future, he feels the program has been well worth while.

The broadcast has resulted in other surprising services, too. There was a feminine driver, for instance, who declared she was unable to pay a fine, and "couldn't really afford to operate a car; I'd sell it at the first opportunity." She was startled when two telephone calls offering to buy the car

came in while she was still discussing the matter in court.

A stickler for justice but a firm believer in tempering it with mercy if he is convinced the case warrants it, the judge fines sentences or reprimands indiscriminately and speedily. Letters applaud his fairness and his humanity.

A Stanford university law student was advised that "an important principle of a law career is to appear in court only as a representative of someone else, and not on your own behalf," and then his penalty was adjudged in proportion to his meager finances.

One of Judge O'Connor's favorite sentences is compulsory attendance at a "traffic school," in which violators are enlightened on traffic laws, and then given an examination to ascertain the extent of their added education.

JUDGE O'CONNOR follows the court broadcast with a 15-minute period "Traffic School of the Air" program, during which he answers questions submitted by his listeners, advises on traffic problems, and reviews recent accidents, explaining how they might have been avoided.

He was rather surprised at the

Traffic School of Air Gives Drivers Practical Advice

"tan mail" response to the following incident in his court.

The violator was decidedly a foreign-appearing individual, and Judge O'Connor suspected that he could neither read nor write. The violation was disregarding an arterial "stop" sign.

"Why, I don't believe you could read what it said on that sign," the judge remarked. "Are you POSITIVE you can read?"

"Sure!"

"Well, we'll give you a little test anyway, to make sure."

Judge O'Connor's eyes fell upon the large black lettering on his office door, "POLICE JUDGE."

"What does that say do you know?"

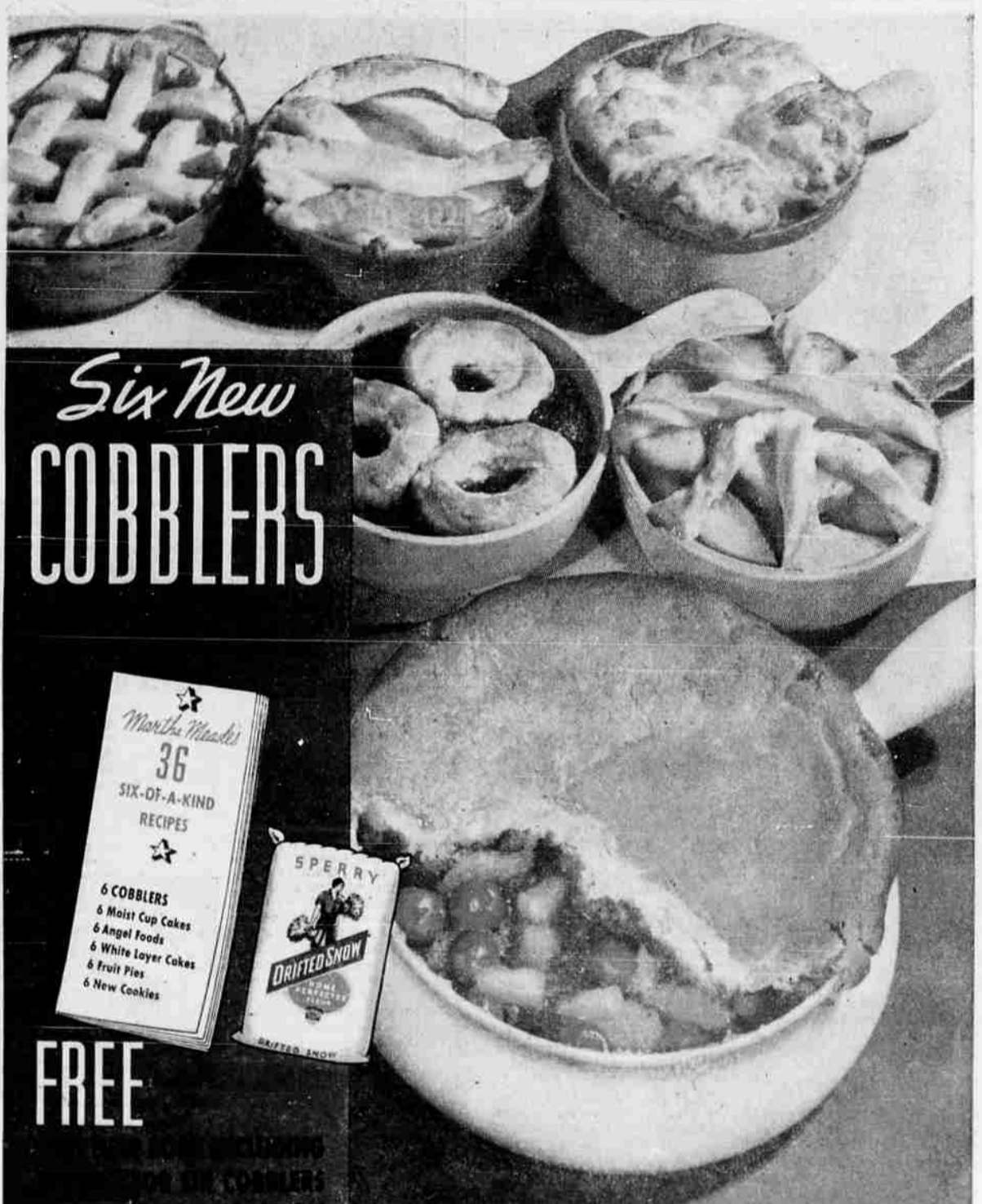
The foreigner stared for a long minute.

"Sure!"

For another long minute he peered intently.

"Well, what does it say?"

"It say," the defendant answered triumphantly, "STOP!"



Six New COBBLERS



FREE

FOOD, NOT STARS, FORETELLS FUTURE OF YOUR CHILD

"What will my child be like five years from now?" In ancient days parents asked the stars for an answer, but science today foretells the future by something more reliable—food!

Given the correct diet, your boy or girl can normally expect to grow up healthy, well developed, equipped to be a victor in the battle of life. Medical authorities agree that an adequate supply of Vitamin B, the appetite and growth vitamin, is essential. University of California tests showed that children fed wheat germ, rich in Vitamin B, gained three times as fast as other children.

Wheat germ (heart of the grain) is a rare food substance requiring a bushel of wheat to produce an ounce. The same wheat germ used in university tests is now being toasted and added to a well-known hot cereal called Wheat Hearts. The result is a cereal naturally sweet and nutlike in flavor. Also, because it is extra rich in Vitamin B, physicians are recommending it for child diet.

Mothers may secure Wheat Hearts from their grocers. As an inducement to try it, the makers offer to send a genuine Opwida Community Tador Plate baby spoon, (retail value 50¢) for only ten cents and a grocer's sales slip showing the purchase of one package of Wheat Hearts. Sales slip and ten cents mailed to the Sperry Flour Co., Dept. C, San Francisco, will bring the silver baby spoon postpaid.

TRY IT

Vitamin B
Hot Cereal—
It Tastes Good!

"Don'ts" From The Radio Police Judge —

- DON'T DRINK if you are driving.
- DON'T DRIVE if you are drinking.
- DON'T drive at a speed inconsistent with the hazards of road-bed and visibility.
- DON'T FOLLOW other vehicles too closely.
- DON'T FAIL to stop at all "Stop" signs
- DON'T JUMP traffic lights.
- DON'T TRY TO PASS unless you have sufficient space.
- DON'T BACK UP without knowing the way is clear.
- DON'T TRY TO PASS on a curve.
- DON'T FAIL to give proper hand signals when turning
- DON'T see how close you can come to pedestrians.
- DON'T WORRY about the right of way—GIVE IT TO THE OTHER FELLOW!

overflow the benches and line up against the walls

The judge confronts a "guest artist," introduced by the simple routine of calling out his name: "John Blank, 1234 So-and-So avenue. Charged with violating Section 5678, speeding, 38 miles per hour through a 20-mile zone, guilty or not guilty?"

From there the case goes on, and the microphones relay every word to the "fans" at their loud-speakers. A leading man in amateur theatricals for years, before superior officials decided it wisest to eliminate his stage activities as "unbecoming to the dignity of the office," Judge O'Connor knows

asked if he knows the traffic code. He does.

"Well, do you know what the difference is between a 20-mile zone and a 25-mile zone?"

"Sure," the tall, dark youth answers. "In a 20-mile zone, you go 20 miles an hour, and—"

The "guest artist" is checked by the laughter which sweeps the courtroom, and the judge, grinning widely, finishes out the interpretation: "... and in a 25-mile zone, you go 25 miles per hour, is that it?"

He explains then, patiently and thoroughly, just what zoning means, and it is here that he

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THIRTY SECONDS IS ALL THAT TAKES TO MAKE A BATCH OF SPERRY PANCAKES

WE NOW HAVE PANCAKES EVERY DAY. SOON LEARNED THE EASY SPERRY WAY

YOUR SPERRY PANCAKES HIT THE SPOT I'LL TAKE A DOZEN, WHILE THEY'RE HOT

YOU'VE HAD TO WAIT FOR HALF AN HOUR, IF IT WASN'T FOR THIS PANCAKE FLOUR

by Ferg

famous "Six-Of-A-Kind" cook book, packed free in every sack of Drifted Snow Flour. This is the "Home-Perfected" flour which has helped thousands of Western homemakers avoid baking failures and save money. Before it ever goes to you! grocer, Drifted Snow Flour is tested by Sperry's staff of 117 "Home-Perfecters"—homemakers like yourself, not professional cooks. The Drifted Snow label is placed only on flour which they find perfect in results... assurance that you will have equal success with it in your kitchen.

Variation in flour quality causes one-half of all baking failures! Avoid this expensive

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60 Prairie-Winning Pastries

Big 100-page new book about PASTRY, including the winning 100 recipes for pies, tarts, cheese straws, meat pies, potato shells, French pastries, etc. See bargain offer in coupon.

SPERRY FLOUR CO., San Francisco, California

Please send me Martha Meade's book, "60 Prairie-Winning Pastries." Enclose 10 cents, stamps or coin, and grocer's sales slip showing purchase of Drifted Snow Flour, any size sack. (Regular price of book 15 cents without sales slip.)

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