

# A 'Super' Day in Los Angeles

**Editor's Note:** Many readers know Noel Neill was the "First Lady of Metropolis," but many may not know Larry Ward, who was Neill's manager and friend. Ward accompanied Neill at every Superman Celebration she attended.

Over the years, Ward has provided guest columns to the *Metropolis Planet*.

Ward recently shared his experience being a part of a special gathering on June 30 honoring the cast of the 1950s television program, *The Adventures of Superman*, which starred Neill.

By Larry Thomas Ward

The Adventures Continue is an online discussion group for fans dedicated to honoring the popular 1950s television program, *The Adventures of Superman*, starring George Reeves, Noel Neill, Jack Larson, John Hamilton and Robert Shayne.

Led by retired Pennsylvania educator Jim Nolt, members of this active international organization ([jimnolt.com](http://jimnolt.com)) also occasionally meet in person, usually in a formal setting.

Last year they gathered in Sarasota, Florida, and this year's event was memorably held on June 30 in Los Angeles at the elegant Renaissance Hotel at Los Angeles International Airport.

More than 100 invited

guests from all parts of the United States attended the private formal luncheon, a tribute to Noel Neill and Jack Larson, with fond remembrances of John Hamilton and George Reeves, with presentations by those who knew them best. Fans and friends journeyed from New York, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Maryland, Florida, Minnesota, Illinois, Michigan, Arizona, Washington State, Nevada, Texas, Missouri, New Jersey, and from many cities within California.

Metropolis was represented by long-time Superman Celebration participants Stephanie Perrin, Larry and Sheila Blankley and Gary and Linda Woods.

The lively five-hour program included presentations by myself along with Nolt, Pam Munter, Rennie Chamberlain, Marty Pasko, Alan Howard, Gary Grossman, Larry Blankley and Vincent Roth.

A lasting friend to Neill, noted Hollywood film historian and author Munter spoke eloquently and knowledgeably about the studio system of the 1940s and how actors Neill and Larson navigated through both the film and television industries along their respective paths to stardom.

Chamberlain, Neill's Santa Monica neighbor of over 30 years, spoke movingly of Neill's many kindnesses and of her genuineness, and why she was known as the "Queen of

Sage Lane."

I personally offered an account of the many mishaps while accompanying "Miss Neill" on numerous nationwide book-signing tours; and writer Pasko spoke passionately about the impact the television show had on him and how it guided his work at DC Comics, and his relationships with the honored.

Howard, who was Larson's close friend of 40 years, related how Larson was an unpretentious person who was happiest when he wrote, most proud of his written words. But more importantly, he gave confirmation with the first public statement about the difficulties that gay actors experienced when working in Hollywood at that time; how early in his career Larson had to constantly guard against discrimination and severe retribution simply for being gay.

Grossman, author of the acclaimed 1976 groundbreaking book, *Superman: From Serial to Cereal*, told of his times spent with both Larson and Neill and the evolution of this comic book character.

Ten years ago, when Blankley turned 50 years of age, he was stunned by a surprise appearance by Neill at his birthday party in a church near St Louis, just because she wanted to be there. He spoke glowingly of his love and enduring admiration for her.

Roth, an actor and producer, was the last person to work with both Neill and Larson, as both actors filmed their last roles for



Over 100 guests attended The Adventures Continue celebration on June 30 in Los Angeles. Attendees, including Rose Muzzy, center, had the chance to talk and take pictures of many Hollywood television stars including Tony Dow, left, who played Wally in *Leave it to Beaver*; and Jon Provost, who portrayed young Timmy Martin in *Lassie*.

his 2017 superhero spoof, *Surge of Power: Revenge of the Sequel*. In his presentation, Roth showed film clips of their work, along with rarely seen interviews with each.

There were quite a few authors in the audience as well. Along with Munter, Pasko, Grossman and myself, authors included Laurie Jacobson, John Messing, Bruce Scivally, Jennie Knudsen, Alexis Hunter, Bruce Dettman, Jessie Lilley, John Lustig and Charlie Rose.

And from the cinematic world, actors, directors

and producers included Candy Clark, Tony Dow, Lauren Dow, Jon Provost, Scott Cranford, Lou Ferrigno, Gerard Christopher, Paul Peterson, Beverly Washburn, Greg Moffett, Jeffrey Breslauer, Ilya Salkind, Deborah Moore Salkind, Joe Ferrara and Vincent Roth.

Both Moffett and Washburn received plaques in honor of their early acting work in *The Adventures of Superman*.

Finally, Larson and Neill's memorabilia, contributed by Brad Shey and myself, were on display

in the large banquet hall, along with many large posters of the cast and crew of *The Adventures of Superman*.

Commemorative coins of the occasion, given to each attendee, were designed by artist Randy Garrett and donated by Dana Pless. Jared Copenhaver of Pittsburgh provided an impressive running video display throughout the program, with additional videos from Brad Shey.

When and where will the next *The Adventures Continue* group meet? Stay tuned...



Visitors to the annual Superman Celebration have certainly bumped into Stephanie Perrin, center. Perrin recently traveled to Los Angeles to attend *The Adventures Continue* event. She appeared with a few "super" men.



The speakers for *The Adventures Continue* event, held June 30 in Los Angeles, included, front row, from left: Alan Howard and Vincent Roth. Back row: Larry Blankley, Larry Ward, Pam Munter, Rennie Chamberlain, Gary Grossman and Marty Pasko. — Photos submitted

## Community

### Karnak News

Hello. I want to apologize for not having the news in the paper last week.

I had several asking and calling about it, so I guess some of you do read the news.

Here are some belated birthdays to send out: Tina Brown Bunch and Shayne Bradley, both on Aug. 25; Willy Wells and Robert Inman, both on Aug. 26; Charles Barnett and Andrew Hubbard, both on Aug. 27; and James Short, Steve Heisner, Lora Earnhart, Roger Kerly and Alisa Rogers Sowers, all on Aug. 28.

Here are some people having birthdays in the next few days: Janet Huckleberry Hester, Aug. 30; Chris Helton, Craig Bradley, Shanny Wilson Anderson and Tori Inman, all on Aug. 31; Huck Barham and Tammy Capps, both on Sept. 1; Stacy Shumaker Parker, Sept. 2; Randy Kern and Tyrone Anderson, Sept. 4; and Sarah Carter, Alice Cameron Racy, Sept. 5.

I am glad to hear the Vienna grocery store will be opening soon with new owners, brothers Chad and Chance Miles. I guess the closest place around here to get food would be Karnak or Metropolis.

I would like to send

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prayers out to the family of Earl Mariman, who passed away last week.

Congratulations to Rachel and Shayne Bradley on the birth of their first child, Owen Michael Bradley, on Aug. 25, which is also his daddy Shayne's birthday.

Charlotte and Kirt Alfter went on a trip out West to see some sights and family. They left Arkansas and drove to Lincoln, Nebraska.

The first day they went onto Laramie, Wyoming trailered the bikes to there, then road them to Rapid City, South Dakota where they stayed four days.

They went to Mt. Rushmore, which were just beautiful pictures. I can't even come close to the beauty or the feeling you get when you stand there.

The next day was spent with her boys, Jason and Kyle. They took her on a five-mile hike, which was beautiful.

They road all around the Black Hills, which were

beautiful — just breathtaking. They had a few adventures on the way, went about three hours out of the way missed a turn, then it started to rain then hail and almost ran out of gas.

When they say there's nothing out there, they mean nothing, not even a tree.

But they made it. I guess that's what makes it an adventure.

#### Nine or Nein

Karl was meeting a friend in a bar, and as he went in, he noticed two pretty girls looking at him.

"Nine," he heard one whisper as he passed. Feeling pleased with himself, he swaggered over to his waiting buddy and told him a girl had just rated him a nine out of 10.

"I don't want to burst your bubble," his friend replied, "but when you came in, they were speaking German."

I hope you have a good week.

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