

St. Norbert College

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History of St. Norbert College and Radio in
Green Bay (WTAQ & WHBY)

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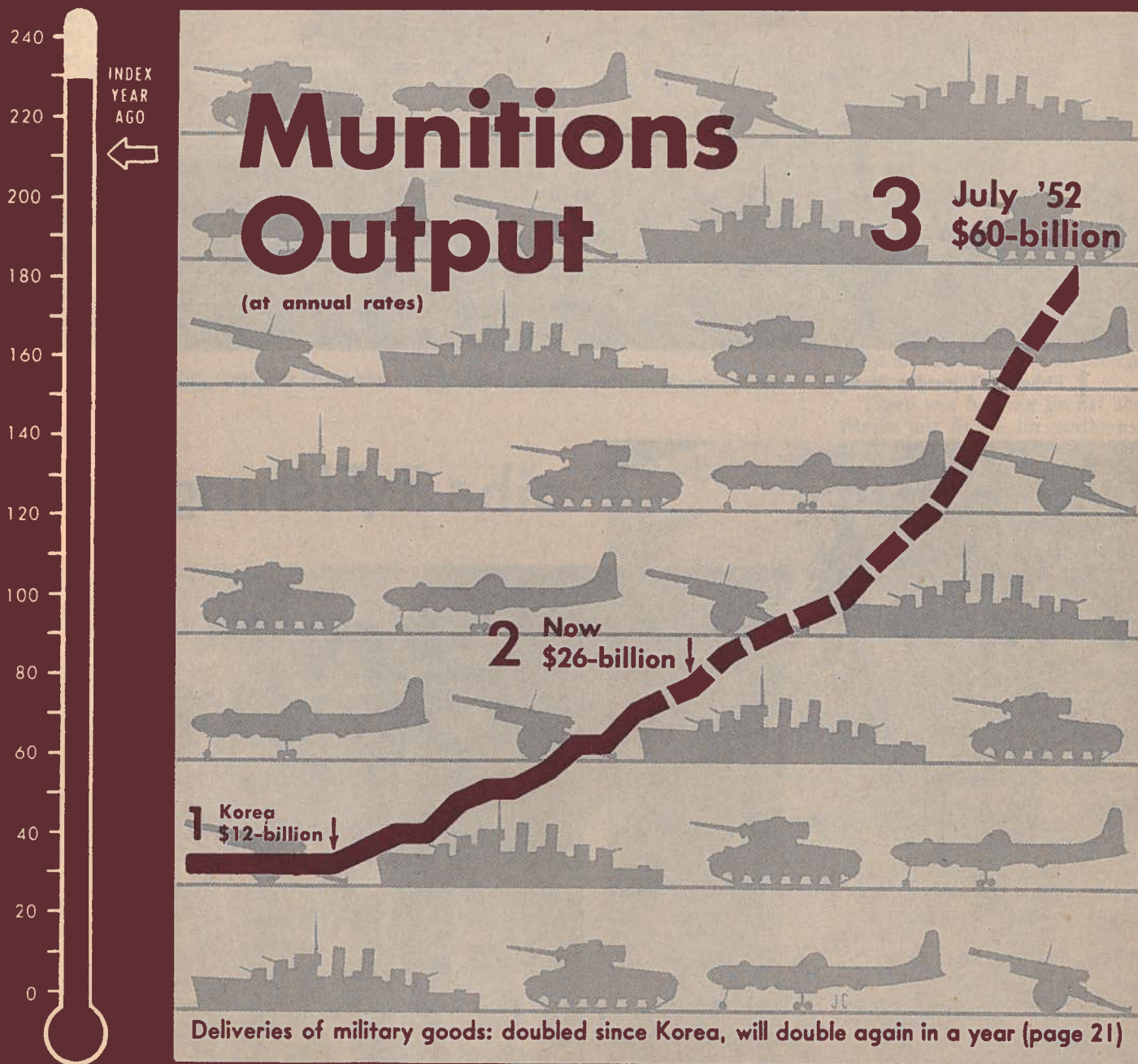
1951

Fishing Sponsored By Radio

Business Week

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BUSINESS WEEK



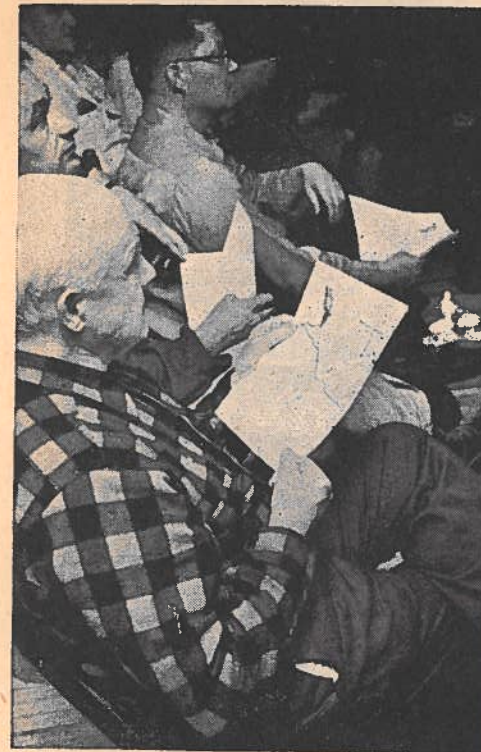
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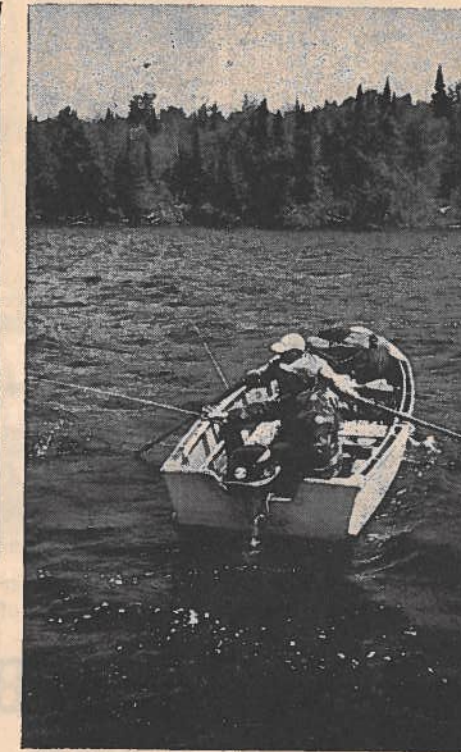
SMALL BUSINESS



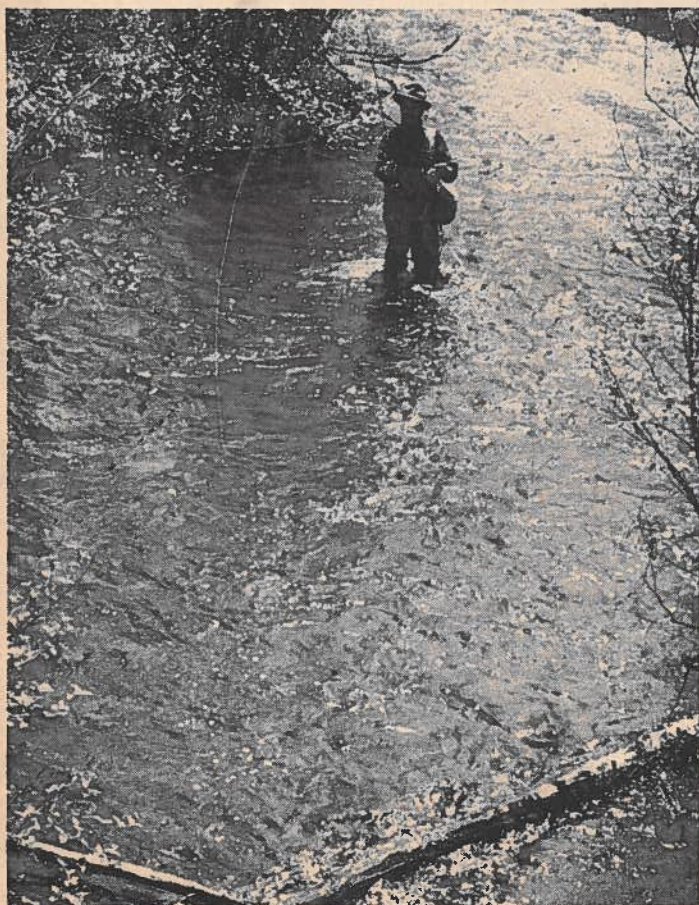
1 Fisherman's paradise in north woods country of northern Michigan was picked for Station WBAY's angler's holiday.



2 Briefing on area came the first night.



3 Lake Gogebic had walleyes galore.



4 The trout were there, but this fisherman got only chubs and wood ticks for his five hours on the first day.



5 The lucky ones brought in their limit. Fishing started with the sun, went on as long as there was light to see.

Fishing Spree—Sponsored by Radio



When angling stopped, tale-telling began around the supper tables and in the bar.



6 Scoreboard showed heaviest take in walleyes. Final total topped 300.

One man stayed within 40 feet of his cabin door and caught 21 walleyes. Six men spent five hours hacking their way into an "unfished" lake and came out without a bite.

It was that kind of a contest. In three days, the 60-odd anglers from northern Wisconsin proved almost every fable written about fisherman's luck. The veteran brought in an empty creel; the youngster with a can of worms caught his limit.

Yet everybody won a prize. • **What Contest?**—When Green Bay (Wis.) Station WBAY drew plans to stage its first annual fishing contest, it decided to make it a contest in name only. The idea was simply to promote goodwill. Goin' fishin'—with WBAY picking up the tab—was the prize.

From towns and villages in the Green Bay area, the station got newspapers, Izaak Walton Leagues, and conservation clubs to pick the men in the communities who had done the most in conservation work and outdoor service. To fete the 60-some nominees, WBAY took over Northern Holiday, a giant lodge on Lake Gogebic, in the northern peninsula of Michigan.

There was nothing formal about it. People just fished—for northerns, walleyes, trout, muskies, whatever they wanted. Eventually, everyone got a Champion Angler's Certificate, and WBAY a bill for about \$4,500.

• **Value Received**—"Mister, we bought an awful lot of goodwill," is the way Haydn Evans, general manager of WBAY feels about it. And goodwill and promotion are now standard parts of the WBAY formula—a formula that has built it from a \$900 loser in 1939 to an \$80,000 profitmaker in 1950.

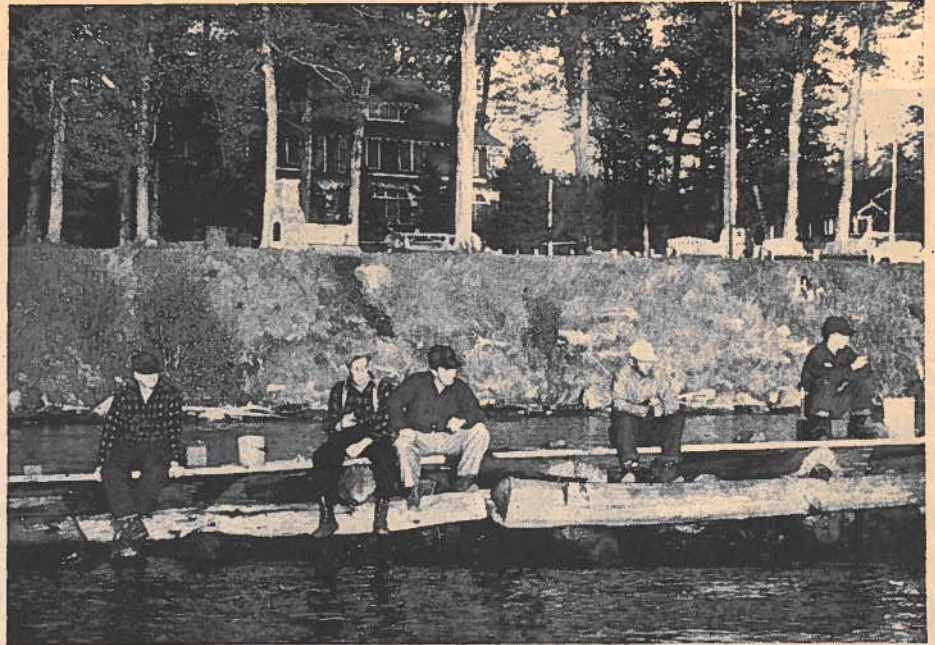
WBAY is one of a handful of commercial stations owned and operated by the Roman Catholic Church. It belongs to the Order of St. Norbert and is directed by the fathers who run St. Norbert College at West DePere, Wis. Set up in 1922 the station broadcast on an experimental basis for three years, cracked the commercial field in 1925.

• **Slow Start**—It cracked it—but not noticeably. All through the 20's and 30's, the station ran consistently in the red. It wasn't until 1940 that the profit-and-loss statement began to show any signs of health.

The prescription that did it was a complete change of staff and policy. In 1939 Haydn Evans, an ex-Variety salesman and later commercial manager of a South Dakota station, came on as general manager of WBAY. Evans, who was the originator of the Pot o' Gold program, doubled station overhead in his first six months. But his shakeups in staff and programming began to pay off almost immediately.



CLEANED CATCH went into freezers, became family breakfast on the weekend.



NORTHERN HOLIDAY, now a resort lodge, was built as hideaway by one-time lumber baron William Bonifas. It was the scene of Edna Ferber's novel, *Come and Get It*.

Fish, Gossip and Service Build WBAY

• **Everybody Talks**—"In a way, our competition is the family telephone," Evans says today. "We try to give people the same sort of information they get from calling up their friends. We use our 5,000 kw. to make one great big party line out of this whole Green Bay area."

A daily listener to WBAY probably drinks morning coffee to exactly that background—the station's own Party Line program. It's a show of telephone calls. People phone in with an old sofa to sell; someone needs a practical nurse; a dog is lost; a lady wants to know how to keep brown sugar from hardening. It all goes over the air.

Later there's a rundown of all the

babies born the day before. When bad weather forces school closings, the listings go on the air at three different times. The Trading Post broadcasts free classified ads. What's for sale at auction? Once a week an auction calendar tells you.

• **News**—The news is handled in the same over-the-back-fence way. With 10 tape recorders, there is a heavy amount of local on-the-spot coverage—something that none of the big stations that come into Green Bay could attempt.

Actually, the technique of all WBAY programming is to use as many live voices as possible. Instead of filling in with records around its network shows (the station is a CBS affiliate), it tries

to create its own personalities.

• **Service**—Apart from broadcasting, WBAY finds other ways to serve the Green Bay area—and promote itself. It gives a St. Norbert scholarship every year to one boy in each of the three local high schools. A while back it sponsored an expedition to Alaska; schools and civic groups are still booking the films of the trip—free. A few months ago, when the school patrol needed raincoats, WBAY threw in \$1,000.

What about television? WBAY has its application in now. "If it comes, we'll use the same formula," Evans says. "The family phone will still be our competition."



HIERARCHY OF WBAY are manager Evans, director Rev. Matthew Beemster.



GOOD MORNING, LADIES, what's new? Phone is backbone of station's Party Line show. Calls come in so heavily it's often 20 min. before first commercial.