

Past President (1957-1958) George Korhumel

By: Kathy Jex

Recently I had the pleasure of lunching with former Ad Club President, George Korhumel. As we sat in the Main Dining Room at The Toledo Club, George reflected on his life and career in the Toledo advertising world, entertained me with many fascinating stories of family and friends and even shared in a game of "geography", finding common acquaintances from a time when I was beginning my career and the ad world was just beginning to find uses for computers. Those computers eventually put typesetters and keyliners out of work, and our business hasn't stopped evolving since then.

George was born and raised in Toledo, attending OLPH and Central Catholic High School. Like so many in his generation, he became a Marine and served tours of duty in Korea and Viet Nam. He graduated from Notre Dame with a degree in business and began his career working with his father, selling printing machines. As the printing business evolved and changed, so did George's business, keeping up with the times.

I will have the complete interview ready at some time in the near future, but in the meantime, I wanted to share a little bit of George's memories of the Advertising Club. He was President in the 1957-58 fiscal year, and apparently, it was much more difficult to be a member of the Board of Governors, as you will see from the interview. Enjoy!

Interview:

I'm trying to think when I was president . . . and it's not too long after I was a member, I think I was a member of the Ad Club in around 1950, or '49, '50, somewhere in there; because I didn't come to work here until, really I graduated (from Notre Dame) in '49, and I went to Chicago and then I came back and I remember Maury insisted I join the Ad Club and I did. And so I was involved from 1949-50, and I don't think it was more than 5 or 6,7 years before I was proposed.

We had such strange things I can remember, whatever the date was. I don't know whether it was to run for President or to run for the Board, but we had these, I remember, you wouldn't remember this name at all, but his name was Charlie Marx, he was a photographer; might have been a little screwball . . . he worked down the street and he eventually ran my campaign for, and I don't remember if it was the campaign for the Board or the campaign for the Presidency, you had to campaign for it. And they had it in the old Secor Hotel, which has, if you've ever been in there, right inside the front door is a beautiful ballroom and a stage. And yes, in those days you had to put on a little skit or something, and he had me, I couldn't believe this, but he had me in not a Speedo, but in a tight little bathing suit with a bunch of wings. I must have a picture of that somewhere, but I don't think I want to show it. And you had to do something silly and it was well received. It wasn't a bad idea.

And so we went through all that and I was elected, I think I was elected just to the Board maybe because they moved the Board members up, they used to move them up to Vice President and then eventually to President. And I ended up being Vice President with a guy named Jack Solon. He was with a glass fiber business, but they picked up and moved out of Toledo or Perrysburg, their headquarters to Denver. And he, right in the middle of his term, he's leaving. And he moves out there and I eventually, just by osmosis I became President, and I looked at him and said to him, "You can't do that to me!" I was only 25 or 26, and I hadn't been involved that long. He said, "You can do it, you can do it". So I did. I ran the Club I think for just a year. And then I became very involved in the Board, I stuck around the Board for years. Mae Jo Ritchie and bunch of the old guys, maybe Fred Harrington too. I was just very involved with the Ad Club and I was there a lot.