

Talk show host talks to students

The "real forms of our times" are television commercials, a group of writing students was told Friday at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point.

Jean Shepherd, a New York City radio talk show host, author and occasional TV and stage humorist, was speaking to the students by way of a telephone hookup from his office.

Commercials, better than just about anything else, show the "hopes and fears of our time," he said.

They will provide fascinating viewing 100 years hence, he added.

Shepherd spent an hour answering questions over the special telephone hookup from the class of Dr. Richard Doxtator, an English professor, and devoted much of the time to predictions on the kinds of literature, ideas and parts of Americana that will survive.

Not enough is being done he said, to save things of the present. Just about all of the emphasis is on items from the past. He suggested the saving of a "1964-style shopping center — it will be fascinating to visit in a hundred years."

Good humor will survive, but just whose he's not sure. Maybe Jerry Lewis, who has a universal following because "his work is universal." Humor, he added is much more enduring than comedy because most of today's comedy acts are built on poking fun of

politicians and their work, which he described as trivial.

A joke about former Vice President Spiro T. Agnew no longer is funny, he said.

In a few years, he predicted, there'll be trivia questions on, "Who was John Ehrlichman?" Ehrlichman is a principal defendant in the Watergate affair.

Meanwhile, the humor surrounding Mark Twain's character, Huck Finn, will survive as it already has for more than a century.

Shepherd has been writing

since he was in high school — one of his first works was an article for a school newspaper describing what it's like to sustain a broken nose in a football game and begin experiencing pain as fans cheer.

Perhaps his best known work is a recent book entitled "Wanda Hickey's Night of Golden Memories."

Shepherd has a regular talk show on Radio Station WOR in New York City and appears occasionally on programs distributed by National Educational Television.

Thurmaier wins local speech competition

Despite the fact that he is confined to a hospital bed, Kurt Thurmaier is the winner of the 28th annual Voice of Democracy scholarship program at Stevens Point Area Senior High School.

Thurmaier is in a partial body cast since breaking a leg which had been weakened by a previous operation. He was at home, but returned to the hospital when he became ill.

He was able to participate in the contest because contestants submit tapes rather than making their speeches in person. Thurmaier said the program is conducted that way "so the judges can't tell who's giving the speech."

He said he taped the speech Monday and had to tape it five times before he felt it was acceptable. "I could barely talk

when we got through," he said.

David Waldherr won second place and Elaine Rekowski third.

The contest is sponsored locally by General McGlachlin Post No. 568, Veterans of Foreign Wars and Auxiliary, and the theme this year is "My Responsibility as a Citizen."

Thurmaier will compete with winners from other schools in the seventh district, and the winner will be announced at the Veterans of Foreign Wars mid-winter conference, Jan. 26 at Wisconsin Rapids.

The district winner will enter state competition and the state winner will go on to national competition.

Dennis Bonikowske, chairman of the SPASH English Department, is the coordinator of the program at that school.