

CREATORS SYNDICATE CELEBRATED 10TH ANNIVERSARY IN 1997

LOS ANGELES -- Creators Syndicate is celebrating its 10th anniversary this month and making history as the first successful independent newspaper syndicate in more than two decades.

Founded in February 1987 by Richard S. Newcombe, the Los Angeles-based company is today one of the world's largest feature syndicates.

"We're all proud of the accomplishments of so many at Creators and of the enormously talented people we represent, but the biggest challenges and rewards are before us as we move into the new millennium," said Newcombe, President and CEO of Creators Syndicate. Newcombe was formerly a top executive at the Los Angeles Times Syndicate and the CEO of News America Syndicate.

Commenting on the anniversary, Jack Loftis, editor of the Houston Chronicle, said: "Ten years ago, my longtime friend Rick Newcombe had a vision which rapidly developed into a reality. Today, his Creators Syndicate occupies a front-row seat in the extremely competitive newspaper syndicate business. And I offer my congratulations."

Robert H. Giles, editor and publisher of The Detroit News, said: "What I've always admired about Creators Syndicate is its willingness to give beginning columnists an opportunity to be syndicated when other syndicates are not interested." Giles, current president of the American Society of Newspaper Editors, added: "As a consequence of their syndication, Warren Brookes and Tony Snow are two fine examples of great success due to Creators."

Editor of The Boston Globe Matthew V. Storrin commented: "I know Rick took a big chance when he founded Creators, and he did shake up the syndicate business -- but it needed shaking up. And I also know that he has made a very big success of Creators Syndicate."

Top writers and artists represented by Creators Syndicate include Ann Landers, the most widely syndicated columnist in the world; Johnny Hart, the most widely syndicated cartoonist in the world with his comic strips "B.C." and, with Brant Parker, "The Wizard of Id"; editorial cartoonist Herblock of The Washington Post, who has won more Pulitzer Prizes than any other journalist; First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, who made history with her decision to write a syndicated column; Robert D. Novak, host of CNN's "Capital Gang"; and best-selling authors Molly Ivins and Thomas Sowell.

When asked about the 10th anniversary, Ann Landers said, "I'm proud to be with a syndicate whose chief, Rick Newcombe, started on a shoestring and ended up owning a shoe factory."

Johnny Hart told this story: "A guy on the phone asked me the other day if the name 'Creators' had any religious significance. I told him, 'Not really ... ' After I hung up, I

thought of the honor, trust and faith that is the essence of the concept of 'Creators': If you created it, it belongs to you -- forever. ... Pretty darn close."

Recently, when two phenomenally successful cartoonists retired from the industry, cartoonists from Creators replaced both of them in newspapers across the country.

"One Big Happy" by Rick Detorie was chosen by hundreds of editors as their "Calvin and Hobbes" replacement. Three panel cartoons -- "Rubes" by Leigh Rubin, "Speed Bump" by Dave Coverly and "Ballard Street" by Jerry Van Amerongen -- filled the space left by Gary Larson's "The Far Side" in more U.S. newspapers than any other comic panel.

Leigh Rubin, who has been with Creators since 1989, has sold more than 10 million "Rubes" greeting cards and enjoys great success with calendars, T-shirts and other products. Rubin said this about Creators: "They have set the standards for the industry. Rick Newcombe is a visionary, and he has the best team in the business."

The highly regarded Creators sales force includes Mary Ann Veldman and Margo Sugrue. Marianne Sugawara, assistant to the president, began working at Creators in 1989. Finance Director Melissa Lin is also a longtime member of the team.

Mike Luckovich of the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, who won the 1995 Pulitzer Prize for editorial cartooning and who has been syndicated by Creators since 1988, said: "My experience with Creators has been that whenever I have a problem, they are always willing to resolve it to our mutual satisfaction. I really feel they are trying hard for me. The same cannot be said for many other syndicates. I know because some of my friends are with them."

In addition to many other features, Creators Syndicate represents astrologer Holiday Mathis, motivational speaker Zig Ziglar, and political columnists Mona Charen, Stephen Chapman, Susan Estrich, Robert D. Novak, Robert Scheer, Walter E. Williams and Mark Shields. The comic strips "Momma," "Liberty Meadows" and "Archie" are part of the Creators family as well, as are award-winning editorial cartoonists Bob Gorrell and Chip Bok.

"The past decade has been terrific, and the next will be even better," Newcombe said. "The information industry is changing at a revolutionary pace, and Creators Syndicate is fast becoming the world's leader in providing columns, cartoons and other forms of information services. We have an unshakable faith in our future success."

Investor's Business Daily referred to that unshakable faith as "steely determination" and said that Creators Syndicate has accomplished the "impossible" by becoming "the first successful independent syndicate in two decades and only the second major independent founded since the 1930s."