

The U.S. Postal Service Controversy: The Hollywood Chamber of Commerce has Their Own Postal Controversy Re: The Failure to Install the Star, ("#Leosloststar"), Awarded to the "Thanks For The Memory" Oscar-Winning Lyricist More Than 30 Years Ago

SHERMAN OAKS, CA / ACCESSWIRE / August 25, 2020 / Today the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce is facing their own postal controversy regarding the failure to install the star awarded to lyricist Leo Robin more than 30 years ago while the country experiences the U.S. Postal Service controversy. In both cases, it's all about choosing the winners. In the case of the Postal Service, the debate is over slow mail, also known as snail mail, and the impact on mail-in voting to select the President of the United States in the fast approaching 2020 Presidential election. In the case of the Hollywood Chamber, it's about an acceptance letter for a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame that was sent to a sponsor but never received because the Hollywood Chamber made a mistake with handling their own mail which obstructed installation of Leo Robin's star.

One would like to believe that the Hollywood Chamber conducts its affairs as a professionally run organization and the Hollywood Walk Of Fame Committee is a deliberative body that makes decisions in a highly ethical ecosystem like one should find in a boardroom. Apparently, the Hollywood Chamber conducts its business in a different way based on the unprecedented situation with regard to the star awarded to Leo Robin more than 30 years ago but never installed because of a mistake made by them. The lyrics written by Leo Robin of his song

"True Blue Lou" may be analogous to the conduct by the Hollywood Chamber in respect to the ambience of a pool room: "Down in the pool room some of the gang Were talkin' of the gals they knew." Except in this case, "the gang Were talkin' of the... (honorees) they knew."

*Tony Bennett singing the jazz standard "True Blue Lou,"
composed by Richard A. Whiting with lyrics by Leo Robin and Sam Coslow, circa
1963*

Ashley Lee from the Los Angeles Times first broke on May 23, 2019 this intriguing story, [Leo Robin never got his Walk of Fame star. Now his grandson is fighting for it](#), about the grandson's serendipitous discovery on July 6, 2017 of Leo's long-lost star which he believe got lost because "[The Hollywood Chamber of Commerce]...made this 30-year-old mistake," Ms. Lee quoting him. In 1988, both Robin's wife, Cherie Robin, and actor, Bob Hope, sponsored Leo for a posthumous star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. They followed the instructions and mailed in the application approximately five years after Robin's passing so that he would be eligible to be nominated for a star as soon as possible. But all too soon after that, Cherie, herself, already grief-stricken, was diagnosed with a terminal illness.

Tragically, Cherie Robin never received the good news about Robin's star because she passed away on May 28, 1989, a little over one year before the letter from the Hollywood Chamber was sent out on June 18, 1990 announcing that her husband had been awarded the star. As a result of these ill-fated circumstances, Leo's star was never installed. "I do think it was meant to be," said Ora of discovering the star. "It's important to me because it was important to my grandmother to pay tribute to Leo's career in this way. And she took the time, she followed all the rules. My grandmother did everything right except live long enough."

In the wake of the release of this story last year by The Times, Leo Robin Music was outraged to learn that the Hollywood Chamber made a mistake with handling their own mail more than 30 years ago. Ms. Lee reported, "The envelope was returned to its sender and has since remained in the Chamber of Commerce's records." She also tweeted, "at first I didn't believe that Leo Robin's star had really slipped through the cracks" with a photo of that acceptance letter and the envelope stamped "RETURN TO SENDER." Ms. Lee explained the Chamber's view, "A mistake it was not, noted (Ana) Martinez to The Times. Back in 1989, before the ease of email and cell phones, honorees were not as repeatedly and actively pursued to secure their star as they are today. That means no follow-up letters and

no calls to co-signers, even if Robin's application was co-signed by (Bob) Hope, who has four stars on the Walk."

The Hollywood Chamber recently made an announcement of the 35 new honorees from the Hollywood Walk of Fame Class of 2021. With awards season around the corner, everyone will be tuning in to watch the winners announced at the Grammy Awards and the Academy Awards. The recent announcement of honorees by the Hollywood Chamber would be tantamount to announcing a winner at the Grammy Awards or at the Academy Awards and then not giving the winner a Grammy or an Oscar to take home.

Can you imagine if multi-Grammy winner Tony Bennett winning the Grammy Award for Best Traditional Pop Vocal Performance in 1997 for his album *Here's to the Ladies* - which theme of the album was songs made famous by female singers and included "My Ideal" with lyrics by Robin to pay tribute to Margaret Whiting for performing her theme song - but not being given the Grammy to take home or multi-Oscar winner Robert De Niro winning for Best Actor the Oscar in 1980 for the film *Raging Bull* - which used a few songs with lyrics by Robin including "Prisoner of Love" performed by Perry Como (1946), "Prisoner of Love" performed by Russ Columbo (1934) and "Bye, Bye Baby" performed by Marilyn Monroe (1953) - but not being given the Oscar to take home.

"True Blue Lou," composed by Richard A. Whiting with lyrics by Leo Robin and Sam Coslow, was written for the 1929 musical film *The Dance of Life*, an adaptation of the Broadway play *Burlesque*. The song was sung in the film by Hal Skelly, in the role of an out-of-work burlesque comedian. In addition to Tony Bennett's recording circa 1963, "True Blue Lou" was a regular in the set for Ethel Waters, who sang it throughout her career. Many jazz artists have also performed this standard such as jazz trumpeter Louis Armstrong and vocalists Frank Sinatra, Nat King Cole, Annette Hanshaw and numerous others.

Meanwhile, in contradiction to its mission, the Hollywood Chamber is not doing justice to the nomination of Robin. Instead we are witness to the injustice of Leo's long-lost star and the Hollywood Chamber's refusal to honor their commitment to Robin's memory. It has always been true when a letter has been "Return to Sender," the sender will verify the address and resend it. In 1990, the Hollywood Chamber obstructed installation of the star when it placed the acceptance letter that was returned to sender in its files and made no attempt to resend it. The Hollywood Chamber made no attempt to notify the sponsor, Bob Hope, who was one of the most famous entertainers in the world at the time. The Hollywood

Chamber must have had Bob Hope's number from their own dealings with him. What the Chamber did after the letter was "Return to Sender" was not customary practice but smacks of disregard for the individuals honored by the Walk of Fame Committee.

There is no question the Post Office has its problems. But when the time comes for the President Elect to put together his cabinet, because of this incident with mail at the Hollywood Chamber it's safe to say Mr. President will not be looking there to select the next Postmaster General. As of 1971, the Postmaster General is no longer a member of the Cabinet and is now appointed by nine governors, appointed by the President. There are typically only 25 stars awarded each year. It shouldn't have been that hard. Everyone else that year was given proper notice, had ceremonies and received stars. Someone somewhere should have done something. Anyone taking the time to apply as a sponsor for a candidate to receive a star has to believe that the Hollywood Chamber would be able to process the chosen few applications correctly. And, even more so, that any candidate approved for a star, would get a star.

Johnny Grant, who was named honorary mayor of Hollywood for life and Chairman of the 1990 Walk of Fame Committee and signed the acceptance letter addressed to Mrs. Robin, must be looking down with bewilderment at the Hollywood Chamber for spurning the decision by the 1990 Walk of Fame Committee to award a star to Leo Robin. Johnny Grant, from the heavens, must be now thinking *'I know I showed the staff of the Hollywood Chamber where the roll of postage stamps are kept but I must have forgot to teach them what to do if mail is returned to sender. Apparently, they were only capable of licking the envelopes with stamps and kissing the buttocks of the elites while spitting on the star awarded to Leo Robin and his memory. Why didn't someone tell me about the returned letter? Bob Hope was a friend and mentor of mine who I knew since the USO tours back in the '40's to entertain America's armed servicemen and women. I would have just called Bob myself.'*

Throughout the past sixty years, the Chamber has successfully kept track of 2,691 honorees and has seen to it that each and every one of them received a star, which was then successfully installed on the Hollywood Walk of Fame - except for Robin. One would think that today's Hollywood Walk of Fame would honor the decisions made by those who served before them. At this point, one can't help but conclude that Robin, his sponsors, his family and the 1990 Walk of Fame Committee, itself, have been treated unjustly by the Hollywood Chamber and the Walk Of Fame Committee. It's time, in postal terms - priority, for the Hollywood

Chamber to honor the decision made by the 1990 Walk of Fame Committee and honor its obligation to put Leo's long-lost star in its rightful place on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

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