

## In Memoriam

We have received word of the deaths of the following Elfuns:

**John C. Buchta**, 91 of Lexington, MA, died on April 13, 2018.

**William “Bill” Gray Johnson, Jr.**, 90 of North Syracuse, NY, died on May 18, 2018.

**Kenneth John Scott**, 85 of Baldwinsville, NY, died on May 20, 2018.

**Walter R. Winslow**, 95 of Cazenovia, NY, died on June 9, 2018.

**Julio R. Fenocchi**, 96 of Liverpool, NY, died on June 12, 2018.

Full obituaries may be found on [Syracuse.com](http://Syracuse.com).

## Holiday Party Survey Results

Over the past several years attendance at the annual Holiday Party has been declining, reaching a new low of 43 for the 2017 event. To assess Elfuns’ reasons for attending or not attending, and also to solicit their suggestions for possible changes, a survey postcard was included in a sample of the April 2018 newsletters. The image below shows the questions asked of those receiving the survey and a summary of their responses.

To help us plan a 2018 Elfun Holiday Party, have you attended this event in the last several years?    **66%**  yes **34%**  no

If you answered “no” was it because:    **3%**  It cost too much  
**9%**  Don’t like to dance                    **6%**  Didn’t like the meal choices  
**22%**  Don’t like to drive after dark    **3%**  Didn’t like the location  
**9%**  Don’t get out much                    **16%**  Other reason \_\_\_\_\_

If we plan a 2018 Holiday Party, would you prefer:

**53%**  Daytime event                        **34%**  Nighttime event  
**19%**  Weekday event                         **56%**  Weekend event  
**25%**  Live band                                 **25%**  Disk jockey

Any comments? \_\_\_\_\_                    **See writeup in newsletter.**

Received 34 responses out of 80 cards sent out, a 43% response rate.

The following points stood out in the responses:

- The major reason for not attending was driving after dark. Nothing stood out as a common complaint in the other reasons for not attending.
- In terms of preference for a future event, a daytime event on a weekend was the “winner.”
- Music is wanted, whether by a band, a disk jockey or other was not a big factor either way – just as long as the music wasn’t so loud it made conversation difficult.

Discussion of how to respond to the results of this survey occupied several board meetings but we think that we’ve come up with a plan that should satisfy most folks – you’ll read the details later on page 4 in this newsletter.

## Annual Meeting



40 Elfuns and guests attended the Syracuse Elfun Society Annual Meeting on Thursday May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2018 at Barbagallo’s Restaurant in East Syracuse, NY. Chairman Carl Chermak conducted a brief business meeting starting with a review of the financials for fiscal year 2017/2018. Syracuse Elfuns conducted 8 social activities in 2017, with 5 events already scheduled or completed this year. Syracuse Elfun volunteers, led by Marv Hahn, were recognized by Hope for Bereaved for our work at the Butterfly Garden of Hope. The four directors nominated for reelection, Bob Bryerton, Cindy Chermak, Bob Ruth and Marv Hahn have received sufficient votes for

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reelection to additional 3-year terms beginning July 1, 2018.

Immediately following the business meeting, the attendees were treated to an outstanding presentation about baseball in Syracuse by Jason Smorol, GM of the Syracuse Chiefs.



**L to R: Carl Chermak, Jason Smorol, Cindy Chermak**

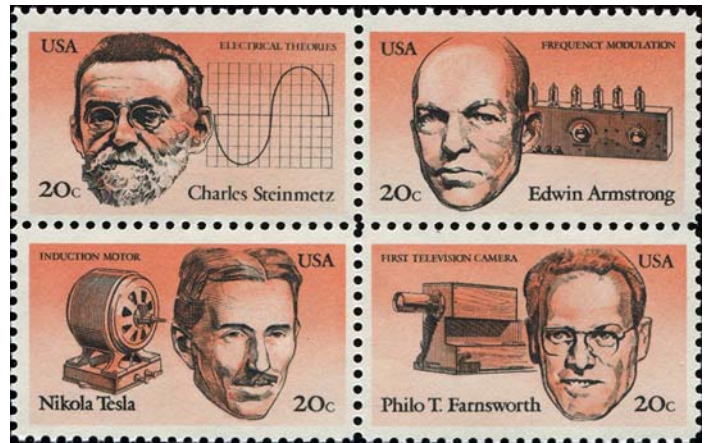
## Support STEM?

Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics, that is.

One way you can publicize STEM is to use one of the stamps recently issued by the US Postal Service on your letters. Issued in sheets of 20 stamps, each sheet contains four different designs – one each for Science, Technology, Engineering and Math. No surprise here.

Frankly though, the designs are sort of, well ..... weird ....., cluttered with equations that won't mean much to most folks, and against a background of a head with some sort of rays coming out of its eyes.

The American Inventors stamps issued by the US Postal Service back in 1983 seemed to have a lot clearer and less crowded design. Of course though, you can't just walk into your local post office and buy these any more.



## Summer Social Events

We have already had a busy summer. On June 1, a group of 24 had glorious weather and a delightful buffet luncheon on Skaneateles Lake aboard the Judge Ben Wiles. Mid Lakes Navigation was appreciative that they could launch their brand-new buffet, provided by The Sherwood Inn, with a familiar group. The lobster bisque and cranberry mayo received high marks as we cruised the beautiful and peaceful shoreline.

We were back in Skaneateles just a few days later, although we stopped first in Auburn to attend Mamma Mia! at Merry-Go-Round Playhouse. This fast-paced fan favorite brought out a group of 48 of us, who were dancing in the aisles and singing along to "Waterloo" at the curtain call. The Sherwood Inn served a delicious buffet, capped off by a berry pound cake dessert. We will see what our 2019 Broadway in the Finger Lakes outing brings.

By press time, we will also be ready for Elfun Family Day at the Ballpark, with a group of at least 36 Elfuns, spouses, children and grandchildren. The Syracuse Chiefs will host us on Sunday July 22 when they face the Louisville Bats. It is a great day to sit in the sun with your friends and family and maybe enjoy some ballpark food and a little baseball along the way.

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# GE Can't Get Rid of Its Light Bulb Business

GE has been linked to the light bulb for the past 126 years. Now, GE is having a hard time getting rid of it.

It's been nearly a year since cash-strapped GE revealed plans to sell the struggling light bulb business and focus instead on moneymakers like jet engines and MRI machines.

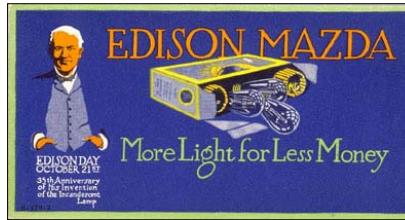
But GE has yet to find a taker for the iconic unit. The company is in "active discussions" with potential suitors for the lighting division, CEO John Flannery told analysts during a conference call last month.

However, no concrete deal has been reached yet. Even as GE has moved forward with sales of other storied businesses like the 111-year-old rail division, the company declined to provide CNNMoney this week with an update on efforts to sell GE Lighting.

The struggle to sell the light bulb unit underscores the dim outlook for the lighting industry that GE and the conglomerate's cofounder Thomas Edison pioneered.

GE's lighting sales plunged by 59% last year to just under \$2 billion. Although lighting long defined GE, today it's the company's tiniest division, accounting for less than 2% of its \$122 billion in annual revenue. GE has decided to shift focus onto three core areas: healthcare, power and aviation.

The lighting slump isn't special to GE, which has also been grappling with troubles in its insurance, power and transportation businesses. It's



an industrywide problem driven by low prices and the popularity of LED lights that last for decades, limiting the need to replace them.

"It has not been a particularly good business to be in," said RBC analyst Deane Dray.

The other issue is that light bulbs, unlike some of GE's other products, are relatively pedestrian these days. One light bulb may not be dramatically distinguishable from another.

"It's become more commoditized. It's not a technology-rich business," said Cowen analyst Gautam Khanna.

A century ago, the light bulb unit produced some of GE's greatest innovations. In 1892, GE began machine-molding bulbs instead of hand-blowing them. A GE engineer developed the first modern light bulb in 1906. And in 1935, GE light bulbs were used to light the first nighttime Major League Baseball game.

GE, coming off its worst year since the 2008 crisis, has promised to sell \$20 billion of businesses by the end of next year to raise cash and pay down debt.

GE's dealmaking is complicated by effort to limit its bill to Uncle Sam. For instance, the rail deal is tax-free, but it's an intricate transaction that will take place over several years and involve a mix of cash, stock and a spin-off. Repeating the same task for the light bulb unit may take time.

CNNMoney - May 22, 2018

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## White Deer & Belhurst Castle Event

In 1941, when the U.S. Army built a 24-mile fence to enclose the Seneca Army Depot, several white-tailed deer were caught inside. Over the years, these deer were protected from predators and the herd grew. In the early 1950s, two white deer, a natural variation of the wild deer, were first seen and protected by the soldiers on the Depot.

Those deer have now become the world's largest herd of white, white-tailed deer...the Seneca White Deer.



After nearly 60 years of service, the Army closed the Depot, but the fences and mysteries remain. Today, the Depot has returned to private ownership, with public access – including tours of the Depot area, including sightings of the Seneca White Deer.

We have scheduled our Seneca White Deer Tour on Thursday, August 23 at 10:00 am sharp. Driving time from the Liverpool area to the Welcome Center is about an hour. The tour leaves the new Welcome Center in Romulus for a 90-minute narrated bus ride through the former Seneca Army Depot. Though white deer sightings are not guaranteed, we hope to see a few as we hear about the history of the depot and visit one of the 519 “earth-covered igloos”. Photography is encouraged, so remember your camera. Please note the bus is not ADA compliant. You must negotiate several steps to board and exit.

Following the tour, we will proceed to Geneva to the beautiful Belhurst Castle, listed on the National Historic Register and voted one of the most romantic

places in New York State. If you believe in ghosts, you may very well encounter Isabella, the “white lady”. Here is a link to the history of the castle: [www.belhurstcastle.com/accommodations/chambers-castle/belhurst-castle-history](http://www.belhurstcastle.com/accommodations/chambers-castle/belhurst-castle-history). At the castle we will have a summer lunch buffet, which includes entrees, salads, coffee or tea and plated dessert. A cash bar is available.



After lunch, feel free to linger at the Castle to explore, have a glass of wine on the beautiful lake front terrace, or visit the on-site winery, craft brewery and gift shop. If you are feeling really indulgent, there is a spa as well. Your email confirmation will include driving directions and a list of attendees. Limit 25 (tour capacity) so make your reservations early.

We are in the preliminary planning stages for another outing or two in the fall. Keep watching your mail and email for news and registration information for our exciting adventures.

## 2018 Holiday Party

We have made some changes to our annual Holiday Party for 2018. As the group has evolved, the big evening dinner dance at the Lakeshore Yacht & Country Club has experienced declining attendance. As noted on page 1 of this newsletter we have had some feedback that a daytime luncheon may be preferable, so we will try it this year. Mark your calendars for 12:30 on Saturday December 1<sup>st</sup> for a social hour and lunch at The Inn Between Restaurant in Camillus.

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This beautiful farmhouse, circa 1880, is set in a field so picturesque that you will hardly realize you are actually on busy Route 5 only a few minutes out of Syracuse. We will dine on the sun porch and in the adjoining intimate rooms, all decorated for the holidays.



A recent review in The Post-Standard described it as: “...a traditional American fine dining establishment helmed by an award-winning chef and located in a 19th century farmhouse between Camillus and Elbridge, hence its name.”



Our luncheon entrees will be Chicken Wellington, Roast Tenderloin of Beef and a Vegetarian Entree of the chef’s choice. Light holiday music will be provided during the luncheon. Price will be \$30/person for Elfuns and spouses, slightly higher for guests.

Please note that due to the historic nature of the building, attendance is limited to 75 and the building is **not** ADA compliant, requiring six indoor steps to enter and exit.

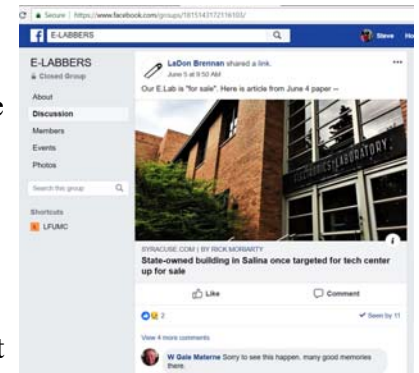
A reservation form and more information will be sent out this Fall, but in the meantime mark this December 1<sup>st</sup> event on your calendar!

## E-Lab Alumni

Former workers at General Electric’s Electronics Laboratory in Syracuse, NY have established their own Facebook page to make it easier to keep in touch with each other and share information about activities.

You can find us on Facebook at the page called E-Labbers. We would love to share news from our alums and families and perhaps catch up to our former colleagues.

The latest news about EP-3 was in the Syracuse Post-Standard a few weeks ago and there is a link to the Syracuse Post-Standard article on our page.



## Food Bank of CNY Public Service

There are still some slots available for volunteers to support the Food Bank of CNY by manning collection points during the upcoming Syracuse Nationals.

Collection points and times are: July 19<sup>th</sup> 8am-7pm at the Electronics Park Holiday Inn; July 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> 8am-5pm at the NYS Fairgrounds and July 22<sup>nd</sup> 8am-1:30pm at the NYS Fairgrounds.

Call Shannon Griffin at the Food Bank at 315-437-1899, x223 or send her an e-mail at **sgriffin@foodbankcny.org** to check on available times.

# GE's Journey Through High Fidelity

Syracuse played a huge role in GE's early Hi-Fi products, but before getting into that, let's take a look back and examine some of GE's earlier "Lo-Fi" products.

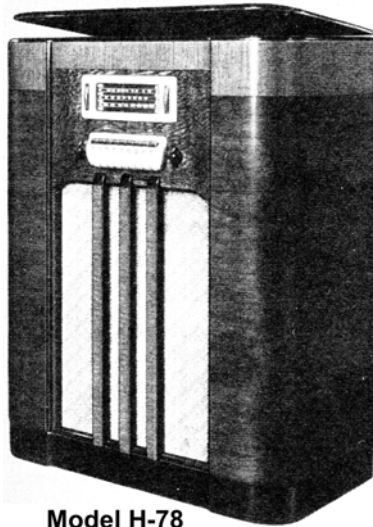
As far back as the mid-1930's GE produced a number of radios in Bridgeport, CT that included a phonograph. In 1939 these came as both large consoles such as the model H-78, and tabletop units such as the HJ-618.



Model HJ-618

The H-78 provided coverage of the AM broadcast band as well as coverage of the 2.2-22 MC shortwave bands. Prior to WW 2 many countries maintained powerful shortwave broadcasting networks that provided up-to-the-minute world news and commentary to Americans, and radios that could receive these shortwave broadcasts were popular (if you could afford them). In addition to the radio, a manual phonograph was included that could play either a single 10" or 12" 78 RPM record (if you moved up to the model H-79 the manual phonograph was replaced with a record changer that could accommodate up to twelve records.)

The large attractively-styled wooden cabinet and 12" loudspeaker in the model H-78 certainly provided better sound than the 5" speakers in the table radios of that time but the H-78's audio output of 3.7 watts was not that impressive. That coupled with the low fidelity of the 78 RPM records with their high background noise level produced anything but high fidelity by today's standards. While the H-78's list price of about \$180 doesn't sound too bad, remember that

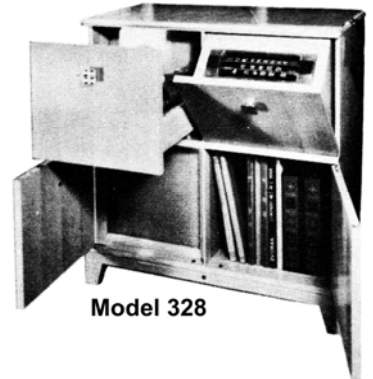


Model H-78

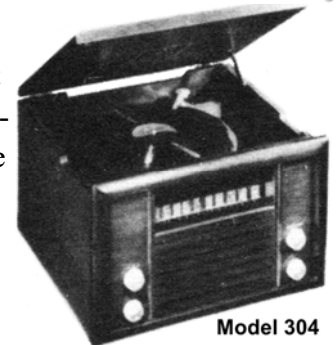
those were pre-WW2 dollars which translate to about \$3,400 today!

If you couldn't afford an H-78, or didn't have space for the large console, your option was to buy an HJ-618 table-top unit with a radio that covered only the AM broadcast band, a manual phonograph, and a 6.5" speaker driven with 2 watts of audio power.

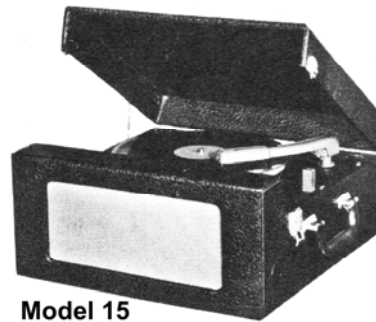
Other than styling, things hadn't changed much in the years immediately after WW 2 when your choices in the late 1940's might have been GE's model 328 console unit, or the model 304 tabletop unit – both of which included 78 RPM record changers. Again, the 304's list price of \$109.95 doesn't sound too bad until you realize that turns out to be in the ballpark of \$1,300 today. If you wanted something less expensive or more portable,



Model 328



Model 304



Model 15

GE offered their model 15 which omitted the radio and had a manual record player, but which was certainly easier to pick up and carry with you.

Things began to change with the introduction of longer playing and higher fidelity 33 $\frac{1}{3}$  RPM records in 1948, along with the increased popularity of FM broadcasting which offered greater fidelity and less noise and static. By the early 1950's the individual components of a Hi-Fi system became available that a homeowner could purchase and assemble into a complete system custom designed to fit his (or her) budg-

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et, living quarters, and listening tastes.



GE's Specialty Electronic Components Department in Auburn, NY produced a line of turntables/ changers, pickups, preamplifiers, amplifiers, crossover networks, loudspeakers of various sizes and power ratings, and nice-looking cabinets that could hold all these items.



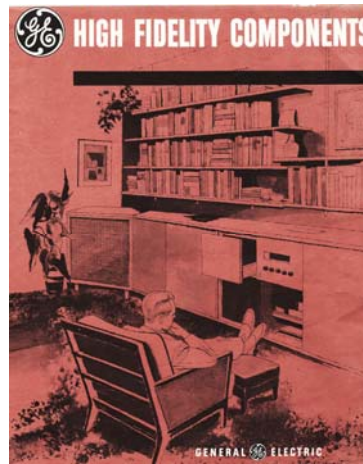
Truly, anyone with some technical expertise, and there were certainly enough of us in the Syracuse area, could assemble their own custom Hi-Fi system and then engage in long discussions with our friends as to whose system had the better features and performance.



Of course "anyone" didn't really mean "anyone" as GE's advertising was targeted at consumers with particular tastes in music. If you look carefully at the records featured in the advertisements you'll see that they featured composers such as Bach, Vivaldi,

Stravinski, Brahms, Rimsky-Korsakoff, Tchaikowski and Beethoven. No Elvis Presley, Ray Charles or Chuck Berry here!

It was also clear from the advertisements that the person who was expected to buy and assemble these components, and then listen to the results was most likely male. And the proud owner of a Hi-Fi system wasn't expected to be doing anything other than listening when the system was in operation. No work-



ing around the house, washing the car, or painting the ceiling. Just sitting and listening - preferably in an area of the house dedicated to the finer things in life - literature and music.

If we take a closer look at the individual in one of these advertisements, we can see that he's young, dresses nicely with a white shirt and dark tie, and smokes a pipe. The argyle socks give him away - he must have worked in Marketing.



An added benefit to those who lived in the Syracuse area was that these system components were offered at the Electronics Park Employee's Store at low employee prices.

For Listening, Looking—How About This?



ALL SET FOR STEREO—Joan Small, last summer's "Miss Syracuse" in State Fair Queen competition, adorns this showing of the complete new General Electric "Stereo Classic" line of hi-fi components to play new stereophonic records. The 13 new products seen are now being demonstrated at the Employees Store, are available at employee prices.

Speaking of Speakers — Here's Newest



MUSIC MAESTRO, PLEASE—Betty McComb of Bldg. 2, Electronics Park, is seen with one of the 15 new General Electric products in our "Stereo Classic" line. The Employees Store has been exhibiting these fine GE stereo sound products—now available at money-saving employee prices.

November 1958 Syracuse GE News Advertisements

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Responsibility for the audio products shifted between GE locations over time. In the 1930's and early 1940's it resided in GE's Radio Division located in Bridgeport, CT. In the early 1950's the High Fidelity Section/Radio and Television Department, at Electronics Park was in charge. By the mid-1950's high fidelity components had moved to the Specialty Electronic Components Department on West Genesee Street in Auburn, NY. With the demand for TV sets in the 1950's resulting in Electronics Park production facilities being devoted to television, radio production was shifted to the Radio Receiver Department in Utica, NY.

In the 1960's the "assemble-it-yourself-from-components" high fidelity craze had largely given way to the sale of complete stereo systems with GE's advertising showing how the man of the house could still have his sound system while keeping his wife happy as well.



Without adding one new wire! That's the unique home-entertainment innovation available only from G.E. Here's how Porta-Fi works. An optional transmitter in the console sends sound through your house wiring. The Porta-Fi speaker plays it, wherever you plug it in. Or you can shut off the console sound and listen to Porta-Fi alone. There's more, much more! A 4-track, 2-channel tape deck with twin dynamic microphones, AM/FM/PM Stereo Tuner, superb Tonal-I record changer, and the G-E Man Made® diamond stylus. The eight balanced speakers are front mounted in acoustically lined, closed chambers. And there's a lot of extras as long as your arm. Choose from 30 other models. Stereo consoles and stereo-television combinations priced from under \$150 to over \$1,000\*\*. Most with Porta-Fi option, a number with tape, too. At your G-E dealer's. \*Standard fee discounts introduced by the General Electric Company. \*\*Priced optional with dealer's margin for Fair Trade where applicable. Model shown: SC, 1744-0000

**GENERAL ELECTRIC**  
AUDIO PRODUCTS DEPARTMENT, DECATUR, ILLINOIS

With the emphasis now on selling large "Sound Centers" responsibility for production and marketing was shifted to the Audio Products Department in Decatur, Illinois.

But GE was known for skirmishes between locations as to which location "owned" a particular product and that was still the case with audio systems since the Radio Receiver Department might be advertising a portable stereo at the same time the Audio Products Department was advertising a console stereo. It looks as though if a product was portable, Radio Receiver claimed it, while if a product was "fixed" then Audio Products grabbed it.



**1960 Audio Products, Decatur, IL Advertisement**

**1960 Radio Receiver, Utica, NY Advertisement**



As they sometimes do, advances in technology can solve one problem while creating another.

In this case the conflict between Audio Products and Radio Receiver sorted itself out when the 1960's gave way to the 1970's and 1980's, and 4-track tape decks gave way to 8-track cartridges which gave way to cassette tapes which gave way to CDs and then to iPods.

The large fixed stereo systems gave way to smaller portable systems and we eventually ended up with handheld devices that could store our music as digital files and allow us to listen to them through earbuds as

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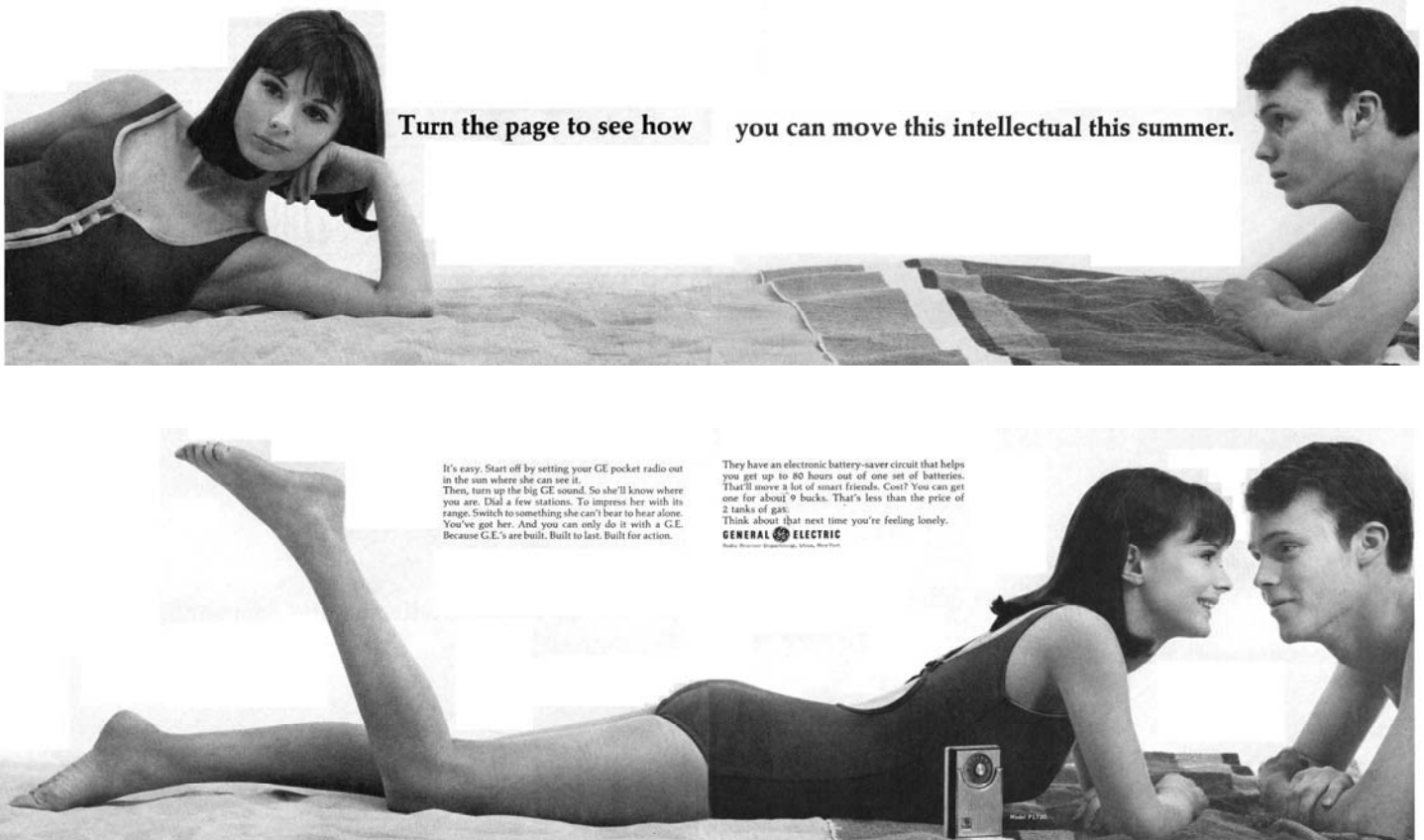


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we went about our activities, or throughout our homes through the “magic” of WiFi and Bluetooth.

And of course, the listeners portrayed in the later ads differed slightly from those in the earlier ads.....

Anyone who would like a full size copy of any ad, any of the GE Hi-Fi component brochures, or any of the installation and operating manuals, all in PDF format, can send an e-mail to [n2tkx@arrl.net](mailto:n2tkx@arrl.net).



1966 “Boys Life” Advertisement

### Syracuse Elfun Society Board of Directors

[SyracuseElfunSociety.org](http://SyracuseElfunSociety.org)

Position	Individual	E-mail	Phone
Chairperson	Carl Chermak	CChermak@aclara.com	315-637-0380
Vice-Chairperson	open		
Secretary	open		
Treasurer	Bob Bryerton	BryertonRobert@gmail.com	315-395-1726
Webmaster/DB	Bob Ruth	RuthRob@msn.com	315-451-0685
Communications	Steve Auyer	n2tkx@arrl.net	315-451-7359
Seniors	Dick Enright	donnae1@verizon.net	315-457-1364
Social Events	Cindy Chermak	Chermak@msn.com	315-637-0380
Work Projects	Marv Hahn	MarvH@twcny.rr.com	315-699-2621
At Large	Fred Wenthen	Fred.Wenthen@gmail.com	private
At Large	Neal Schantz	NSchantz37@verizon.net	315-652-6467
At Large	Pete Scalzo	none	315-457-0598

# GE Nears \$3 Billion Engine Sale

## Conglomerate to shed another industrial unit as it looks for cash; Advent is likely buyer

General Electric Co. is nearing a deal to sell a unit that makes large industrial engines to private-equity firm Advent International for \$3 billion or more, people familiar with the matter said, a move that would bring in needed cash for the struggling conglomerate.

A deal, if completed, could be announced on Monday, the people said. Advent appears to have beaten out Cummins Inc. in an auction for the businesses, according to the people.

The sale is another step in Chief Executive John Flannery's push to simplify the beleaguered company after years of underperformance, by selling \$20 billion worth of assets by the end of next year. GE last month agreed to sell its railroad division in a complex deal worth \$11 billion.

But investors are waiting for a major portfolio update expected to come soon. Mr. Flannery continues to preach that "everything is on the table," including a breakup of the 126-year-old company.

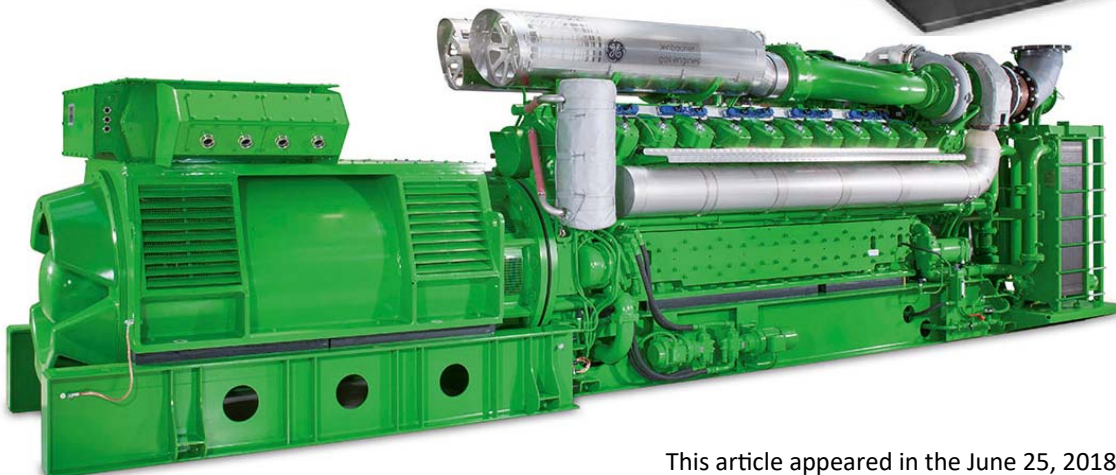
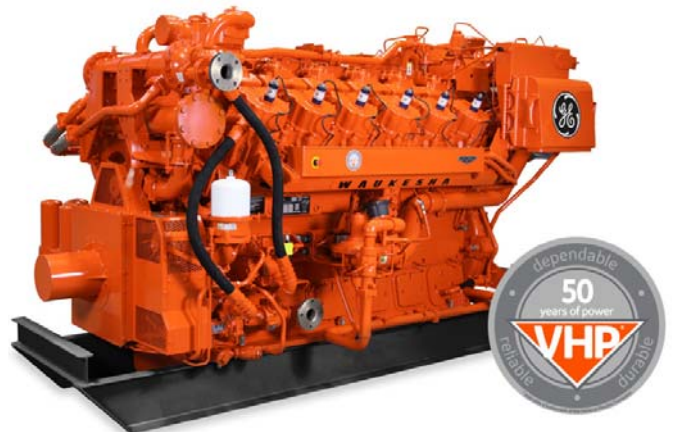
GE just learned in recent days that it will be removed from the Dow Jones Industrial Average after

more than a century in the blue-chip index. The company's shares closed Friday at \$13.05, down by more than half in the past year.

The assets being sold are GE's so-called distributed-power business, which makes Jenbacher and Waukesha gas engines. These truck-sized machines, often painted bright orange or green, are used to generate electricity in remote areas, along with other industrial operations requiring a mechanical drive.

The deal unwinds two acquisitions by former CEO Jeff Immelt, who left last summer after 16 years at the helm. Mr. Immelt exited amid investor pressure to improve profits and revive the stock price, and following his departure GE slashed its dividend and financial targets.

GE acquired Jenbacher, based in Austria, in 2003. Waukesha, which dates back to 1906, came as a part of GE's purchase of oil-and-gas equipment maker Dresser Inc. for \$3 billion in 2010.



**Typical  
Waukesha unit  
above.  
Jenbacher unit  
at left.**

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