

John Dehner
B.J. George

Born John Forkum on November 23, 1915, in Staten Island, New York, John Dehner was the son of an artist and spent much of his youth in Europe. As a teen Dehner returned to the U.S. and tried his hand at stage acting. During World War II he served as a publicist for the Army and spent much time covering Gen. Patton. After the war he worked in radio for many years as newsman, commentator, and actor. John Dehner walked in many circles within the world of communication and entertainment. From being a Disney animator to an award-winning journalist to acting in over 100 films, John Dehner also contributed his talents to radio.

Dehner's deep, authoritative, and sometimes villainous voice made an unforgettable contribution to the airwaves throughout the 1940s and 50s. Once voted "best radio voice" by *Radio Life Magazine*, he was best known to listeners as Paladin on the series *Have Gun, Will Travel*, and as the reporter J.B. Kendall in the short lived but popular *Frontier Gentleman* series. He also lent his talents to writing many scripts for CBS shows such as *Escape*, *Suspense*, and the *CBS Radio Workshop*.

John Dehner worked as an animation assistant at Disney Studios on such projects as: *Fantasia*, *Bambi*, and Mickey Mouse cartoons. He made his film acting debut in 1944 in *Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo* in a bit part. He went on to appear in many movies, including *Plymouth Adventure* (1952), *The Left-Handed Gun* (1958), *Critic's Choice* (1963), *The Cheyenne Social Club* (1970), *Dirty Dingus Magee* (1970), *Support Your Local Gunfighter* (1971), *Slaughterhouse Five* (1972), *The Day of the Dolphin* (1973), *Fun With Dick and Jane* (1977), and *The Boys From Brazil* (1978).

On TV, Dehner was cast as a regular in many series including *The Westerner* (1960) as Burgundy Smith, *The Don Knotts Show* (1970-71) as a regular, and *Young Maverick* (1979-80) as Marshall Edge Troy. He was still appearing on television as late as 1989 in the mini-series *War and Remembrance* as Admiral King.

John Dehner and his wife Evelyn had two daughters and he another stepdaughter and three stepsons. He died on February 4, 1992, in Santa Barbara, California of emphysema and diabetes at age 76. He is buried at Carpinteria Cemetery in Santa Barbara County, California.