

# OFFBEAT: Valparaiso not the only Hoosier address associated with popcorn notoriety

OFF BEAT WITH PHILIP POTEMPA

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Ever since I've written a few recent columns about **Orville Redenbacher**, New York publicist **Stephanie Kerman** has been sending me all kinds of information about a competing line of popcorn snacks she says are destined to be the big hit of this weekend's **Super Bowl** snacking.

And even better yet, there's also a Hoosier connection.

The **Popcorn, Indiana** line of popcorn snacks began in southern Indiana in the tiny town of Popcorn, Ind.

Never heard of it?

Neither had I.

But celebrities certainly now know of it.

The parent company is now known as **Dale and Thomas Popcorn**.

The "Thomas" portion of the company tag comes from **Isiah Thomas**, the former **Indiana University** and NBA star, who, in 2005, approached the company as a "self-proclaimed, passionate popcorn lover," and became so enamored of the crunchy confections he asked to become an investor.

### A corny mistake

In editing my column last Sunday to fit for space, I mistakenly deleted the name of the farmer from Lowell who is credited with working with the late **Charlie Bowman** and **Orville Redenbacher** with developing their hybrid popcorn varieties. **Don Bailey** is the man who helped the duo put gourmet popping corn on the map. My Sunday column mistakenly read as though **Kent Parker** (the reader who directed me to Bailey), was this famed Lowell farmer.

### No relation

Reader **Kilmer Spencer** of Griffith called Thursday after reading my column review of the hit Broadway show "**August: Osage County**," playing in Chicago through Feb. 14 and starring the great **Estelle Parsons**.

Spencer asked if Estelle, now 82, is the daughter of the late, great gossip columnist **Louella O. Parsons**, the devoted journalistic minion of **William Randolph Hearst**. The answer is no. However, Louella, who died in 1972 at age 91, did have a daughter **Harriett Parsons**, who died in 1983 and worked as a successful Hollywood producer, responsible for such films as "**The Enchanted Cottage**" in 1945 starring **Robert Young** and **Dorothy McGuire** and "**I Remember Mama**" in 1947, which starred **Irene Dunne** and **Edgar Bergen**. Though offered the opportunity, Harriett wanted no part of taking over her mother's powerful syndicated newspaper column, which was eventually given to Louella's longtime assistant **Dorothy Manners** following Parsons' retirement in 1965.

The opinions expressed are solely those of the writer. He can be reached at philip.potempa@nwi.com or 219.852.4327.