

James W. Michaels, editor of Forbes for 38 years

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James W. Michaels of Rhinebeck, a native of Buffalo who was editor of the business magazine *Forbes* for 38 years, died Tuesday in a New York City hospital after a long illness. He was 86.

Beginning in 1954, Mr. Michaels served for two years as *Forbes*' associate managing editor, four years as managing editor, 38 years as editor and eight

years as vice president.

He edited more than 1,000 copies of *Forbes*, pioneered the magazine's grading of mutual funds and helped create *Forbes*' list of the world's wealthiest people.

More recently, Mr. Michaels helped launch the "Forbes on Fox" television program and appeared on it regularly.

Yet Mr. Michaels' lasting reputation was that of a tough, no-nonsense editor.

"It was always said that Michaels could edit the Lord's Prayer down to six words and nobody would miss anything," former *Forbes* writer Richard Behar told the *New York Times*.

Although he left Buffalo in the 1950s, Mr. Mi-

chael visited often and was a member of the Canisius College board of trustees from 2001 until earlier this year.

"He was deeply human man, someone you always enjoyed being with," said the Rev. Vincent M. Cooke, president of Canisius. "He always had his own angle."

Mr. Michaels attended Buffalo's Lafayette High School for a year before enrolling in Culver (Ind.) Military Academy and then earning a degree in economics from Harvard College.

During World War II, Mr. Michaels volunteered for the American Field Service and was an ambulance driver for the British army in India and Burma.

He then took a \$35-a-week job with United Press, where he covered the fight for Indian independence and had his report on the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi run in many U.S. newspapers.

After returning home, he was a reporter for *The Buffalo Evening News* and a newspaper in Jamestown before joining *Forbes* in 1954.

Surviving are his wife, Jean Briggs Michaels; a daughter, Ann Frank; two sons, Robert and James W. Jr.; a sister, Harriet Ellis; and a brother, Albert.

Services will be Monday in Marble Collegiate Church, Fifth Avenue and West 29th Street, Manhattan. Burial will be in Rhinebeck.

— Peter Simon