

WCDB 90.9 FM SIXTEENTH ANNIVERSARY PROGRAM GUIDE

# WCDB TURNS 16 ON MARCH 1st!

CLINTON ADMINISTRATION BLAMED

ALBANY, NY-- In a move that caught industry observers off guard, WCDB 90.9 FM, the radio station of the State University of New York at Albany, celebrated 16 years on the FM dial as of the first of March. One industry observer said "It was a surprise in March 1993 when the station turned 15, but this event exactly one year later just took us for a loop!" The nurse then showed up with his pills.

"It was a cold afternoon in March 1978 when the switch was flipped that began the first transmission," recalls long time listener and historian Carmine Chu, who exists only for the purposes of this article. "Moments later, 'Born To Run' by Bruce Springsteen could be heard on radios scattered throughout the assembled crowd. It was inspiring."

But times would change. The station would develop a new format identity within a few years, striving to play rock and other styles of music that commercial stations tended to avoid. The term 'Alternative' was coined to name this format. Soon after, jazz and soul music formats would be added, catering to the more diverse audience and student staff the station was building. But these details are covered by the companion piece elsewhere in this issue, called "The History of WCDB."

As is tradition, WCDB holds an Anniversary party for listeners and staff at a local club. This year, look for it to be held at Bogies in mid- to late April. As usual, free passes to the event will be given away on the air, so tune in to 90.9 FM all month long to win.

Music has changed a lot over 16 years, and WCDB always has, and always will, roll with the changes.

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SPECIAL AND REGULAR PROGRAM LISTINGS

and more...

The Musical History of WCDB every Monday in March at 9 PM on Retrotations/The First 16

Contemporary Soule Classic Jams: details inside...

# THE HISTORY OF WCDB

by Joe Schepis, Editor

Up on the wall in one of the offices of the WCDB Executive Suite are some tattered, yellow newspaper clippings about major milestones in the life of WCDB radio. They're a little hard to find at first, mixed in with layers of other tattered, torn, bizarre signs, posters, photos, buttons, and fragments of record sleeves from decades gone by. But if you stand on a chair or desk for about ten minutes and pull stuff out of the way, you can read them.

That's what I did one particularly boring afternoon during my office hours. I caught up on all my WCDB history. And then I realized that, because of these articles, we know a lot of fun tidbits of information about the early days of WCDB. Yet, since they were written (about 1978), we have almost no official record of WCDB happenings. That gave me the idea for this feature. I wanted to share the legacy of WCDB with all our readers who may have never thought about just where WCDB has been these past 30 years. And if nothing else. I wanted to preserve this detail on the walls of the WCDB office for future generations to cover with photos. chewing gum, masking tape, staples, and staff phone lists from 1982.

The following is our history, more or less, based on past newspaper accounts (many thanks to the Albany Student Press for actually thinking of writing this stuff down at the time), as well as interviews with past and present station members, past executives, and a keen sense of embellishment.

# 20,000 B.C.

The site of WCDB's present studios is molten lava and ash. The carpeting is the same as it is today, however.

# Late 1800's

Gugliermo Marconi, wanting to develop a system by which techno music could be transmitted over a great distance every Friday night from 8 to 11 PM, develops Acne.

# 1 year later

Deciding that "acne" is a stupid name for his invention, he changes the name to "Radio" to help boost sales. The FCC fines Marconi for transmitting indecent static across the room at a time when children might be listening.

# 1900-1948

Absolutely nothing happens. Really. Look it up!

# 1948-1960

The Albany State Radio Guild is founded for SUNY students interested in radio broadcasting. Interest in the club is low since, not only is there no actual radio station, nobody wants to be in a group called "ASRG."

### 1961

Talk of starting a campus station begins.

## 1962

The University gives Radio Guild permission to operate a station on campus, as long as they don't ever play "Achy Breaky Heart." The first station is to be called WCFA, then later WSCA, and finally "Fred, the Station." Even at this time, the goal is to become an FM station.

## 1963

From a janitor's closet (seriously) in the basement of Brubacher Hall, WSUA signs on the air at 640 AM. The signal really isn't broadcast, but rather transmitted to buildings on campus through existing electrical wires. The hum this causes to most listeners leads to the first station slogan, "Buzz Along With Us." We're being totally serious here.

# 1964

Extensive coverage of the Presidential Election by WSUA News receives national attention. We forget who won, though.

# 1965

WSUA first broadcasts to Dutch quad in the new Uptown camps. WSUA becomes an affiliate of the ABC Radio Network. Music format changes from classical and jazz to rock. The janitor protests loudly.

# 1966

WSUA adds Colonial Quad to its campus network. The record library is the largest in the nation for a college station.

# 1968

WSUA adds State Quad. The first Great Danes basketball game is covered. Format is now primarily Top 40.

# 1970

The Student Association approves a plan to construct an FM station on campus. The format of WSUA changes to Progressive Rock. Gosh, guys, pick one and stay with it

# 1971

Studios at new Uptown campus are completed. WSUA fills its schedule 24 hours a day for the first time. Indian Quad is wired up to the transmitter too.

# 1973

Station management begins process of applying for an FM license.

(continued page 5)

# **MODBeat**

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# GET ON OUR MAILING LIST

and have this publication, as well as our monthly WCDB Street Sheet, sent directly to your home. There is no cost whatsoever. Just send your name, address, and mention where you got this copy of WCDBeat to us at the address above. Or, call (518) 442-4242 and tell the DJ to add your name and address to the mailing list. You must renew your subscription every year.

Capital
Punishment
is WCDB's AETAL
SHOW. Tune in
Sunday thru Friday
nights from 1 AA to 3
AA for the heaviest
that hardcore has to
offer.
WCDB Aetal:
Programmed with
your neighbors'
sleep in mind.

# LISTENER SURVEY

Here's your chance to help WCDB better serve your listening needs, and win some prizes in the process! It's the second-ever WCDB Listener Survey. The information you write down on this form will help WCDB make some future decisions that may really make a difference in the way WCDB serves you. You only need to invest about three minutes of your time, and a postage stamp (or skip the stamp and drop it off to WCDB's office in person). In return, your survey will be entered in a special prize giveaway. Two randomly selected respondents will win new release CD and cassette packages. Three others will win WCDB Coffee Mugs. One will win the new 16th Anniversary WCDB T-shirt. Twenty others will each win WCDB Painters Caps. Quite frankly, we probably have more prizes to give away than we will receive surveys, so FILL IT IN and you're almost assured to win SOMETHING!

YOUR RESPONSES WILL BE SEPARATED FROM YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS BEFORE WINNERS WILL BE CHOSEN, SO

YOUR ANSWERS WILL IN NO WAY AFFECT YOUR CHANCES OF WINNING A PRIZE. PRIZES WILL BE AWARDED APRIL 30, 1994. SURVEYS ARE STILL WELCOME AFTER THEN, AND UNCLAIMED PRIZES WILL BE AWARDED TO EACH SURVEY AS IT COMES IN UNTIL ALL PRIZES ARE DEPLETED. PHONE # YOUR NAME: ADDRESS: Mail this entire page (or a copy) to WCDB; CC316; SUNY Albany; Albany NY 12222. []ADD NAME TO MAILING LIST YOUR ZIP CODE (copy from above to this blank too, please): YOUR AGE: # HOURS PER WEEK YOU LISTEN TO THE RADIO: [] Less than 10 []10-15 []15-20 []20-30 []More than 30 The TOP THREE stations you listen to (in order of preference) during the average week are: (Please only list stations that can be heard on the Capital District radio dial.) Do you buy more than six records, prerecorded cassettes or CDs in the average year? 11 YES IINO If the above answer is YES, does hearing a band or release on the radio influence your purchase? [] YES IINO Have you ever listened to WCDB 90.9 FM Radio AT ALL IN YOUR LIFETIME? [] YES IINO If the above answer is NO, please check one: [|Didn't know WCDB existed ||Tried to listen but couldn't pick up station ||Don't feel you would like the music ||Other:

IF you have NEVER LISTENED TO WCDB 90.9 FM, DO NOT CONTINUE. Stop here and submit your survey.

Musical style you have heard WCDB play (check any that apply): []JAZZ []SOUL []ALTERNATIVE ROCK []METAL			
[]REGGAE []LATIN []TALK SHOWS []80's RETRO SHOW []TECHNO/DANCE []HOUSE []Other:			
and without the strain of the second of the			
THINGS THAT HAVE MADE YOU TURN OFF WCDB (check any that apply):			
a. Time to turn off radio regardless of what station was on.		[] TRUE	[]FALSE
b. WCDB signed off the air.		[] TRUE	[]FALSE
c. WCDB changed format at normal format change time.		[] TRUE	[]FALSE
d. Heard a song that was in a style you don't care to hear		TRUE	[]FALSE
e. Heard a really long song that got too boring		[] TRUE	[]FALSE
f. The DJ was saying things that were annoying to you		[] TRUE	[]FALSE
g. The DJ seemed incompetent in running the radio station		[] TRUE	[]FALSE
h. The DJ's musical selection in general was not appealing		[] TRUE	[]FALSE
i. The news came on		[] TRUE	[]FALSE
j. The WCDB Calendar or Club Beat calendar came on		[] TRUE	[]FALSE
k. Heard a song that contained offensive language		[] TRUE	[]FALSE
1. The programming in general seemed geared to college students	and you are not one	[] TRUE	[]FALSE
m. Prerecorded station promos seemed too repetitive		[] TRUE	[]FALSE
n. Pressure by other individuals in the room to change station		[] TRUE	[]FALSE
o. Signal reception of WCDB was too noisy or too weak to be list	enable	[] TRUE	[]FALSE
State if you'd be interested in responding to more questions if: [] Someone called you on		phone [] h	Veither
	[] They were mailed to you with return postage included		

# WCDB PROGRAM LISTING WEEKDAYS

7 AM ALTERNATIVE ROCK An eclectic mix of college grunge, hardcore, techno, industrial, retro, folk, and just about any other style of music.

11 AM JAZZ One of the Capital District's few sources of fine jazz, including Dixieland, fusion, avant garde, and AACM. Requests taken at 442-4242.

# 1 PM ALTERNATIVE ROCK 5 PM CONTEMPORARY SOULE

The freshest mix of urban contemporary music burns a hole in the Albany radio dial, mixed by WCDB's crew of street smart jocks. Requests and shouts gladly accepted. 442-4242.

8 PM ALTERNATIVE ROCK 11 PM CONTEMPORARY SOULE 1 AM ALTERNATIVE/METAL (except Friday: Soule) (To 3 AM)

# **SATURDAY**

9 AM ALTERNATIVE ROCK 11 AM SPORTS SPOTLIGHT

review of the week's sports news, plus topical discussion and your sports question call-ins all hour long. 442-4242.

12 NOON ALTERNATIVE ROCK 5 PM CONTEMPORARY SOULE

All night long. (To 4 AM)

# **SUNDAY**

9 AM JAZZ

12 N LATIN BEAT Three hours of music and information of interest to the Latino community.

**3 PM REGGAE** Dancehall to Dub and everything in between, nonstop reggae fills the air on Sunday afternoons.

5 PM CONTEMPORARY SOULE

**6 PM MAGIC MOMENTS** Soft soul, love songs, and dedications for that special quiet time.

8 PM JAZZ

11 PM JEFF & BRIAN The show that lets you talk back to the station. News, current events, comedy, and your calls round out this circus of clashing egos and conflicting personalities. And that's just among the hosts! Jeff Does Your Homework answers your school-related questions, at midnight.

1 AM ALTERNATIVE ROCK (To 3 AM)

# **SPECIALTY SHOWS**

MONDAY 8 PM THE LOCAL SHOW A live local band plays live original music from WCDB's studio! Artists speak of their music, their band members, gig antics, and relentless gratuitous plugs!

MONDAY 9 PM RETROTATIONS Rewind back to the wonderful 1980's, a decade that's seeming more nostalgic as the 1990's wear on. This is the original and

1990's wear on. This is the original and still the only commercial-free two hour alternative retro music show. Request your faves from 1977 to 1987 only at 442-4242.

MONDAY 11 PM MIDNIGHT HOUSE

Bob Vila never fixed a house like this. This is a two hour excursion into the world of House music.

**TUESDAY 8 PM DISCOVERY** A new CD or LP release played in its entirety. Hear it here before you buy it. Better yet, put in a tape and save \$\$\$.

WEDNESDAY 11 AM BACK WATER BLUES When those mid-week blues get you down, here's the soundtrack. Blues greats for what ails you.

THURSDAY 11 PM TOP 11 AT 11 The top 11 songs on the Contemporary Soule chart, plus *The 411* entertainment news

FRIDAY 8PM CLUB 91 WCDB's tenyear-running alternative techno industrial dance mix for three nonstop pulsestopping, feet-numbing hours.

# SDECIAL ANNIVERSARY DROGRAMS

The Audio History of WCDB The companion piece to the article in this guide is The History of WCDB Special on Channel 91, airing Monday, March 7th, 1994 at 8 PM. This special will not only include all the historical facts, but also feature sound clips of relevant events. Hear rare WCDB tapes, old promos, and a sampling of our musical formats over the years. This special will be repeated on March 28th, and again during summer reruns.

Retrotations/The First 16 What better show to feature a look at the musical history of WCDB than our own Retrotations, the original 80's music show that WCDB pioneered in May 1993? For each of the four Mondays in March, Retrotations/The First 16 will highlight the music of four years (30 minutes per year), starting with 1977. Each block will include the most noteworthy alternative music WCDB played at the time, plus your requests from those years. March 7th features 1977-1980; March 14 features 1981-1984; March 21 features 1985-1988; March 28th features 1989-1992. Tune in at 9 PM each Monday in March to rewind back to the era of Reaganomics, Yuppies, MTV, and classic WCDB! Host 'DJ and a Half will have lots of prizes to give away, including tapes, WCDB mugs & key chains, and T-shirts.

Contemporary Soule Classics The spirit of our 16th Anniversary is alive as always in the Soule department of WCDB. In the planning stages as this guide went to press is a special Classic Soule show featuring your favorite hip-hop, rap, soul and slow jams from years gone by. Tune in to WCDB Contemporary Soule for details on this special show happening in March. Of course, there'll be giveaways and your shouts as well. WCDB has been The Soul of The City for nearly 15 years, as it continues to be today and always.

CLUB BEAT WCDB runs down the listing of local rock and jazz concerts and events at :30 past the hour, alternating with...

WCDB CALENDAR lists information about happenings in the Capital District Community at :30 past the hour. If your non-profit organization would like an announcement aired on WCDB Club Beat or Calendar, send the information at least two weeks in advance to WCDB Club Beat or WCDB Calendar; Campus Center 316; SUNY Albany; Albany, NY 12222. Announcements run for one week. Specify format(s) you are targeting in your announcement (Rock, Jazz, or Soule).

(continued from page 2)

# 1974

Student Association questions the need for a a carrier current station on campus. WSUA voluntarily shuts down for two months. WSUA management questions the need for the Student Association on campus.

# 1975

Station hires consulting engineers to complete FM license application with the FCC. The FCC fines the engineers for wearing pocket protectors at a time when children might be listening.

# 1976

The application for an FM station is completed and filed with the FCC. Because many colleges are applying for stations at this time, FCC takes extra time to study our situation since it is a likely test case for future reference. Meanwhile, Kenny\* calls and asks when the new station will be signing on the air.

## 1977

Permit to construct an antenna and FM transmitter site for the station is granted. The studios at the Campus Center are enlarged to their present size.

# 1978

The new FM station is completed and call letters WCDB (Capital District's Best) are chosen. The station signs on March 1st with a whopping ten watts of power. The first song ever broadcast on WCDB is Bruce Springsteen's "Born To Run," a fact we're not entirely too proud of these days but it must have seemed cool at the time. Good thing we were only ten watts.

# 1979

WCDB adds Third World to its Alternative and Jazz schedule.

# 1980

Rediscovery, a retrospective of alternative bands begins on WCDB, with varying hosts. Also, one of many bands to visit WCDB studios is The Ramones.

# 1982

WCDB increases its power from 10 to 100 watts. The first song over the new transmitter is Velvet Underground's "Rock And Roll." A much cooler choice.

# 1983

After living very close to WCDB's new 100 watt transmitter, students on the top floors of the dorms each grow a third eye.

# 1986

WCDB gets its first CD in the mail. It is from Windham Hill records, and it is promptly stolen.

# 1987

QE2 donates a, CD player to the station, WCDB's first. WCDB's anniversary is celebrated with a major Nine Years of

Noise promotion and contest. Third World format changes its name to Contemporary Soule. For reasons no one seems to know, a silent "e" is added to the word "Soul." Among the rejected names for the format is "The Black Skyline," "Fred The Format," Thumpa "Thumpa da-Dumpa Thumpa." Jealous of all the attention the Soule department is getting, the Jazz department changes its name to "Jazze." Also, the New Age show begins, proving you don't have to be awake to listen to WCDB. The first University Club, a concert series, is sponsored on campus. featuring The Washington Squares.

## 1988

WCDB invites alumni back to celebrate its Tenth Anniversary. For three days, only past DJs are on the air, including Jodie MacDonald, who would later find fame at WFAN in New York. Due to damage in the Patroon Room, the University Club series is canceled following the final show by The Radiators. Meanwhile, the Scott Hamilton concert at Page Hall is the first Jazz concert sponsored by WCDB.

# 1990

WCDB accomplishes the technological miracle of broadcasting a SUNY baseball game by stringing a microphone cable out its window, across a parking lot, to the Athletic Center.

# 1991

WCDB publishes newest version of its program guide, WCDBeat. First issue is program listing oriented. Next issue takes on controversial issues in order to become a sounding board for the community. A letter comes pouring in.

# 1992

WCDB adds new magazine show Channel 91, and a morning talk show called Ron and Brian. WCDB changes its logo to its present design. An April Fool's Day prank is changing the format of the station one morning to Satellite Oldies Network for about 50 minutes while airing messages about loss of all funding and DJs. WCDB begins a full facility renovation program, beginning with rebuilding its Master Control studio.

# 1993

Contemporary Soule increases its format hours to include 11 pm to 1 am time slots. In February, an hour-long interview with Dr. Bob Schwartz, author of book "The One Hour Orgasm," is WCDB's most well-publicized programs. At the program's completion, the FCC visits WCDB, but it turns out to be a coincidence. In May, Ron and Brian get carried away one night and do things that lead to revocation of their

(continued...)

# THE EDITOR'S LAST WORD

I can't believe it's finally here: WCDB's 16th Anniversary Issue of WCDBeat. This issue has actually been planned since mid 1993. Then about three weeks ago I looked at a calendar and realized there were only a few weeks until our birthday, and I figured I better start actually working on it. So how can I sum up the goal of this publication? First, we want to tell you about all the special programs we will be putting on the air beginning this month. These programs really are noteworthy, and if you care anything at all about WCDB as a source of music in the Capital District, you should have every opportunity to hear these shows. We'll also mention our regular schedule because, let's face it, this could be the very first time you're reading one of our program guides. WCDB has a lot to offer in its seven day a week, 20 hour a day schedule. Last and most important, this issue should convey the true celebration of 16 years on the FM dial (and many more years as a SUNY Albany student organization). WCDB is often taken for granted, by both listeners and staff alike, and if only for a moment it is important to step back and acknowledge what a unique entity we are. For 16 continuous years, a fresh and diverse mix of musical styles and creative presentation have been transmitted from modest, state-owned studios. controls have been only college students armed with their credo of bucking the trend of commercial radio programming. All right, I'm really shoveling it now. But who cares? It's our 16th birthday. We can get our driver's license. We've lost our virginity. And our braces are finally coming off next week!

Before I close and send you off to peruse the rest of this issue, I want to relate a true story that I have been meaning to write in these pages for more than two years. Every time I tried to include this anecdote in WCDBeat before, things have gone wrong that kept it from happening. So here goes.

The other day I had to go to an eye doctor here in town. I was having a problem seeing properly out of one of my eyes. "Why not use both eyes?" offered my friend Tom, whom you don't know. But it was too late. I was already in the waiting room at the doctor's office.

Eventually I got in to see the doctor. He put those drops in my eyes that

(continued...)

History, continued...

show. Also in May, Retrotations, a show featuring new wave/retro music from 1977 to 1987 begins as a pilot show. A good deal of positive response leads to the show being made official in September. Ron and Brian reunite for one show in December. Also in December, WCDBeat changes its layout to a single page called The WCDB Street Sheet. The technical renovation continues with WCDB's production studio, and the station's first digital audio tape recorder is purchased. A new seven second delay allows calls to be put on the air live for the first time.

## 1994

Record low temperatures in the Capital District cause WCDB's antenna to freeze. This causes the station's coverage radius to drop to about a mile or two for two weeks. Years of dirt and dust at WCDB's offices are covered over with a fresh coat of paint. Retrotations celebrates WCDB's 16th Anniversary by featuring music blocks from the first 16 years of WCDB's history. The station acquires its new PC to bring all publications and print design in-house. The new 16th Anniversary WCDB T-shirt is unveiled, and sell in droves (we hope). And I finally finish this article just in time for inclusion in WCDBeat's latest issue.

So there you have our illustrious history. Like any station, WCDB has had its twists, turns, golden eras, and blights. Sometimes it's hard to even get a true sense of our history since we student volunteers are affiliated with the station for a relatively short time. The same can be said of some of our listeners, many of which live in Albany for only a few years. But I have learned that the history is there if you want to dig a little for it. Whether it be file drawers of play lists dating back to 1978, yellowed newspaper clippings, piles of dead equipment in the closet, or the timeworn legends verbally passed down over the generations, the history of WCDB is safely tucked into the halls of the Campus Center. (Many thanks to Nate Horwitz, Kristen Coury, Bill Goss, and Brian Kroll for information leading to arrests made during the writing of this article.)

(\* Kenny is one of WCDB's more loyal listeners, known for his frequent calls requesting details of our operating schedule. An inside joke to be sure, but a damn fine one.)

Editor, continued...

make your pupils dilate, and then looked inside them with this sort of eye scope thing. He told me I have something called a Vitreous Floater. I told him that sounded like a doo-wop group from the 1950's. He then gave me this ridiculous explanation that a Vitreous Floater was a small black object that had somehow gotten inside my eye.

"Perhaps it's Emmanuel Lewis?" I posed. "No one's seen him around for a while."

The doctor sent me out to the extremely well-lit receptionist wearing light colors to pay my bill. Or so it seemed after those eve drops. She handed me the bill.

"I can't see..." I said.

She said "You mean you can't read the bill because your eyes are blurry?"

"No, I can't see paying seventy dollars for a ten minute eye exam." I replied, as I wrote out my check and handed it to her.

She looked at my check. Then she asked, "Are you the Joe Schepis that is Editor of WCDBeat?"

I was stunned, but I confessed that I was he. "You read the newsletter?"

"Oh, yes." she said. "WCDB is the only station I listen to." It was something like that. I was too busy dealing with being recognized from--OF ALL THINGS--this program guide.

And that was when it really hit me. People really do listen to WCDB. And they really read our program guides. It's like, dare I say it, we're almost part of their lives! From that moment on, I respected the airwaves of WCDB a little bit more. I became more proud to serve as Editor of WCDBeat. And I realized that this little hundred watt station had a lot more going for it than people often realize.

This will be the last program guide of the Spring 1994 semester, which means that it's time for me to step down as Editor of WCDBeat after this issue. It's been a fun two and a half years. If the look and feel of this publication changes with the next issue, it's because the station bought a new computer to design this guide in house instead of in my apartment. Whatever happens to it, just remember... it's not my fault. Take care, and keep that dial set firmly on 90.9 FM. The only station my eye doctor's receptionist listens to.

Joe Schepis Editor, 1991-94





WCDB proudly unveils its 16th
Anniversary T-SHIRT! The design,
simulated above, includes a comic of the
globe and the words "16 Years and Still
Spinning" on the front of this LONG
SLEEVE 100% Cotton shirt. Our station
mission is printed on the back.
These will be sold in front of the Campus
Center beginning in late March for only
\$9.95, with proceeds to benefit WCDB
programming. Get yours today!

# WCDB 16th ANNIVERSARY PARTY at BOGIE'S

Live Entertainment provided

DATE TO BE ANNOUNCED

ON THE AIR

\$1.00 OFF

the admission price of \$3.00

# WITH THIS COUPON

18 and Over admitted. 21 to drink.