KCPR Stories from Dawn (Rangel) Roznowski; Told to Kristy Duncan | 31 August 2018

**The Burnt Dog**

Dawn thinks the Burnt Dog was around as early as 1983. By early 1984, KCPR DJs were already using “Burnt Dog Entertainment” to refer to KCPR productions. The Burnt Dog was a riff on the RCA Victor dog, Nipper, and a connection to KCPR’s shift in format to a more alternative sound, a sound that would ‘blow your mind’ which may have led to the RCA Victor dog with the burnt matchstick for a head.

Dawn, Scott Larsen and others who were at the station at that time all suggest that Duane Mieliwocki was the originator, or at least closely involved, in the creation of the Burnt Dog.

The first Burnt Dog Entertainment spot ran in Jan/Feb 1984 – likely to start building interest for the Fantasy Festival.

**The Fantasy Festival**

The Fantasy Festival was the brainchild of John Purlia and Jim Merritt, a 6-hour broadcast of a fake concert and production spots to build momentum leading up to the main event. KCPR DJs, including Dawn Rangel, Scott Larsen and Jonathan Monfort, played fictitious characters, or played themselves, as part of the event production. Larsen was Butterfield Davis, the assistant to the architect, Rangel was Candy Levik, publicity, and Monfort was the Presario who donated the funds to build the event center. Other DJs involved were Rick Turner, Miguel Fernandez and Henry Barbay (sp?).

The KCPR team recorded production spots and broadcast live feeds including an unscripted press conference for the fake Fantasy Festival. Daily updates were aired during the news broadcast promoting the event.

The KCPR crew created a ballot to survey the community and get their votes on which bands they’d like to play the Fantasy Festival. The ballot was available around the SLO area including at Boo Boo Records.

The bands that ‘played’ the festival were:

* Duran Duran
* The Rolling Stones
* The Pretenders
* The Who
* The Police

Multiple reels of audio were in a suitcase of Fantasy Festival material; the suitcase was stolen. John P has a recording of a show with Duane Mieliwocki’s voice as the standard intro of updates during the Fantasy Festival.

*Dawn has a cassette recording of production spots but it’s not yet digitized. I recorded some small clips while she played the cassette in their truck and will post those clips. John Purlia posted a clip in the ‘Special Program Segments’ folder titled ‘Burnt Dog Entertainment (plus live update)’ – not sure if this is the clip featuring Duane Mieliwocki, can ask John.*

**The KCPR Format**

Dawn Rangel was at KCPR from 1982 – 1989 (mostly through 1986). When she joined the station in 1982, they were still playing Neil Diamond. She was recruited to join the station by her roommate, Dennis Quaglia “Quick Draw Quaglia.” Dawn’s DJ Mentor/Trainer was Bill Sloan “SLO Town Sloan” who she described as a skinny dude with long Jesus hair. Dawn pushed things during her Trial by Fire by playing Devo because they were not KCPR format, format was still leaning toward The Eagles and Neil Diamond. She played The Doors and Devo and that was seen as a wee “edgy.”

During Dawn’s first year, Jerry Haddox was the GM, Rick Turner was the Program Director at the end of her first year. John Purlia was already on air at KCPR and hated the format so he proposed a special program “JP’s Rock Show” with all live versions.

Rick Turner and Jerry Haddox made a big change in the format in September of 1983 to “friendly new wave ‘80s” and started using the tag “The Sound Alternative.” This predates the Burnt Dog which may have come later that same year. Dawn described Rick as a good leader and Program Director.

During the 1984/85 school year, Duane Mieliwocki was the GM and Steve Theroux was the Program Director. Dawn was a DJ Trainer for the 1984/85 school year and co-music director with Chris Johnson during the summer of 1985.

Dawn described Steve as not being involved as the Program Director during this time and issues arose over the format, there was a void, and problems, tension and division. Some DJs wanted to keep the ‘fun format’ while others wanted to be more extreme, pushing the listening limits for SLO with bands like Scaping Foetus Off the Wheel and Skinny Puppy. Toi Phillips was one of DJs who was a big promoter of more adventurous music.

There was a big shakeup and many DJs running for the office of Program Director for the 1985/86 school year. There was a lot of “I’m going to take over as PD” going on. Dawn describes herself as being more in the middle on the music front and says she quietly put her name in to run for the office, not taking either side. It was surprise to most everyone that she got the Program Director spot for 1985/86.

KD Note: By 1990/91, KCPR’s format was such that the ‘fun’ new wave was rarely heard. Mara “Mara Wildfeverflowerfeuer” Wildfeuer and Amy “Amy K.” Hummel launched “New Wave Mania” as a special program, the DJs alternating weeks.

For the 1985/86 school year, Dawn developed a format plan that she thought would provide a mix and still reach the SLO audience. She shared her ideas with Jim Merritt who helped with the plan and created the format guide. The DJ Trainer gave the guide to every mentor and it was passed out at the general staff meeting. U2 was still in the stack, but other bands were added.

The programming proposal was based on a DJ’s music experience. Rick had the red, yellow, and green cuts. Dawn added the idea of “rough cuts” and clean cuts.” Clean cuts were familiar and in format (Jenni by Tommy Tutone) and rough cuts were edgy, new songs, maybe a good song or alternative cut from a familiar album, but not the hit. DJs were expected to play one oldie per hour – oldies were the roots to the current music. Special programs were included to focus on specific music. Beth Allen, a trainer when Dawn was PD, and Brian “SLO Boy” Curry wanted KCPR to play punk and lots of it. Dawn thought it was too much for regular programming so SLO Boy and Ramona’s Primetime Family Hardcore Show on Saturday nights for 2 hours (Dawn says this was her idea for a special program.)

**First KCPR Pledge Drive 1986**

At end of Dawn’s year as Program Director, KCPR had their first pledge drive (1986). The goal was to reach $10K. John Thawley was the GM at this time and said that if they beat their goal, he would parade down Higuera during Farmer’s Market in a hula skirt. The 1986 KCPR Pledge Week brought in $12K and John wore a hula skirt down Higuera.

**Last Exec Staff Meeting (85/86)**

For the last exec staff meeting, the staff went to Sycamore Springs. Dawn, without mentioning to others, reserved the El Grande hot tub for 30 people and brought multiple bottles of Mr. Bubble, not knowing that one bottle would be more than enough. There were so many bubbles spilling out of the tub and running down the hill, they couldn’t get rid of all the suds. Other bottles were involved as well. Dawn said everyone ended up naked and drunk in a tub. Bruce Flohr and Jason Weil may have some stories, too. *(Yes, I asked if I could share this story with you and she said yes.)*

Other notes …

**Summer of 1985 & Camper Van Beethoven**

The Las Pilitas fire broke out and the town was covered in smoke. KCPR had planned to have a Burnt Dog Bonfire Cookout. The cookout was at Spooner’s Cove at Montana de Oro. Mike Ray was one of the DJs there. Dawn said he had an excellent show.

Dawn and others attended a college radio conference in Santa Clara, it was the timing of the debut of Camper Van Beethoven’s first album. They picked up the album and went to a pizza parlor to check out CVB’s show. Later that year, CVB came to Cal Poly and played. Prior to the show, they sent their long request of must haves including bottles of Glenlivet and specific food. The DJs put on a catered event at Bruce Flohr’s apartment and when the band arrived they looked surprised and said “we were only kidding.”

* “The Fun 91” slogan happened before Dawn’s time at the station (pre-1982)
* Rick Turner overlapped with Weird Al and now works at Disney
* Rick was on the air when Dawn was Program Director and she says he wanted more “Hey, Mickey” on the air.
* Duane Mieliwocki’s senior project was to do a commercial for the station. (Shouldn’t the library have a copy?). Duane is now a Director of Photography