Sara Shaughnessy Interview



by Eric Baylies

Nestled in between New Bedford and Fall River, WUMD 89.3 of UMass, Dartmouth has been broadcasting alternatives to the mainstream for roughly 40 years. I spoke to Sara Shaughnessy (radio name Shaugy) recently about the spirit of radio.

How did you get into radio at such a young age? What are some of he changes you have witnessed?

Sara: I got into it so that I could play all sorts of music- especially more than the music that was being played on the big stations. I have been a DJ at WUMD for approximately 12 years. College radio has changed a little bit as has all music with the accessibility of music with computers and the internet. We have been keeping up with the "Joneses". We are streaming online here. When I started at the station, It was 91.1 WSMU and changed in June of 2006 to 89.3 WUMD expanding the broadcast area. and boosting our wattage from 1,200 to 9,600. During my show you will hear a lot of rock, some reggae, some techno, some blues, celtic, and anything else I might be feeling frisky with at the time.



For many years you hosted the local show. You now host more of a regular show, which is fine, but how come there is no local show when there are now more bands than ever?

Sara: I do try to play a good amount of local stuff throughout the show. There is no Local Anesthesia running at this time, however I do not know sure if there are any shows specifically devoted to playing music from the local area. I believe there is a training class in session right now. The training courses usually run at the beginning of each semester.

You have been doing this since high school. How long will you continue and do you have any interest in jumping ship to a commercial station?

Sara: I don't forsee myself leaving anytime soon. I have taken time off before, so that may be a possibility in the future. I do not wish to move on to a bigger station because then I wouldn't be able to play all the great music that I have the freedom to play now. I am my own producer and I choose the playlists. On the bigger stations (the ones that pay you) you don't have that freedom. You are only allowed to play what the music director gives you- which is made up mostly of newer singles given the station by record companies. And I would probably have to sound happy all the time.

You can catch Sara's show Tuesdays from noon to 3pm, or listen anytime for a greater variety than you will hear elsewhere locally. She has probably played more local music than any other DJ in the history of the station and now you can hear her spinning her other favorites as well. Who is the best local dj? Its Shaugy, its Shaugy, its Shaugy!

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