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## **Editor**

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## **Features**

■ *When Metal Ruled* ■ *Handling Record Breaking Membership* ■ *Homecoming Reflections*

## **Homecoming 2022 at WFCS rapidly rebounded**

**'We used to live here'**

Covid protocols in 2021 made homecoming at the station that year along with doing the traditional alumni shows impractical. It was the first time since 1986 when the radio club reunions began that the station was quiet during Saturday morning's homecoming.

The hiatus clearly unleashed some pent up enthusiasm as the following Oct. 8, 2022, homecoming easily stands out as one of the best alumni radio club gatherings yet, not only for the large turnout but for all the recent alumni who took part. It was a great mix of young, not-so-young and future WFCS alumni who all share that same once-in-a-lifetime radio experience that makes one's graduation year irrelevant.

WFCS (WCCS & WTCC too!) was far more than a place to learn the broadcasting business. It was the nexus of those years at Central. It's where you dropped by at least a dozen times a day to find colleagues and camaraderie; a place where creativity could soar or a stop at the end of the day to round the gang for supper at Memorial Hall. The station is where many life-long friendships began and still continue and even where a few marriages eventually resulted. No wonder one oft repeated phrase heard that morning was "we used to live here."

While the music has evolved and the equipment has advanced, the real radio experience is those social ties that shaped life at Central and forged lasting memories. That experience will keep past and future radio club alumni explaining why "we used to live here." – Paul Koscak '73

*Many thanks to former WFCS General Manager Agatha Hueller, Faculty Adviser Gil Gigliotti and WFCS alumni DJ, Steve Strinie for their assistance in making homecoming 2022 successful.*

**Mark your calendar. This year's homecoming is Oct. 6 & 7 and WFCS will again be part of it. Watch for the fall Radio Days issue for details.**

# 2022's gathering



Front row, kneeling from left: Dick Wiszniak, '73; Gil Gigliotti, faculty adviser; Steve Strinie, '86; Paul Koscak, '73; Vicki Minervino, '19; Mike Dubois, '18; Garrett Copeland, '22; JP Bonilla, '23; Second row, standing from left: Nick Brazil, '19; Samantha Duncan, '20; John Sarra, '73; Eve Sarra, '74; Rob Warner, '77; Bill Pearce, '75; Dianne Zareski, '74; Agatha Hueller, '24; Peter Varhol, volunteer DJ; McKensi Gudrian, '21 Third row, standing from left: Larry Mucci, '01; Andrew Kelley, '15; Nikita Khrenov, '16; Tony Espinoza, '10; Steve Mead, '76

## Metal brought WFCS national fame

By Larry Mucci '01

I joined WFCS in the fall of 1996 and my first two years as a DJ was an extremely exciting time because the station was on a big popular upswing. Before the days of internet downloads and streaming, WFCS filled that void with alternate music formats. We generally shunned Top 40 groups and favored newer, unknown artists.

To gain and keep listeners, the station started block programming. The format provided a time every weekday for each WFCS music department to air its genre.

This was especially true of metal. While the genre was shunned by commercial radio stations in the mid 90s, WFCS drew dedicated metal music fans served by a very dedicated crew of metal DJs.

Metal's long-running Sunday night block was so popular, the Metal Department added a 2 - 6 p.m. weekday block to reach teenagers just getting out of school and drive-time listeners.

## **Metal Man**

Leading the metal brigade charge was Metal Director and WFCS General Manager Chip McCabe. Chip had a passion for growing the metal music fan base and did a great job. Chip's enthusiasm motivated DJs to improve their shows and drove him to connect with record label promoters which bolstered the station's reputation in the music industry.

WFCS garnered a big gain in regular listeners who kept the request line ringing constantly. WFCS's popular metal shows also helped the artists we played sell a fair amount of records. That drew attention from the indie metal labels we serviced and the station managed to show up in the Arbitron ratings, a big achievement for a small college station.

We had a lot of great times in the studio and there was a lot of camaraderie as we shared our love of music. At the same time, WFCS's profile soared. Nationally recognized artists were interviewed and station staff was invited to concerts. Soon, WFCS started a tradition. During the 1997 Spring Week vacation the station sponsored Metalfest, two all-day outdoor metal concerts.

## **Sledge Hammer**

To set up the outdoor stage, WFCS had an official sledge hammer, autographed by Compos Mentis, one of the fest's bands. The hammer became a WFCS office fixture. The following year, in addition to popular local groups, we booked some national acts including show headliner Crisis.

In 1998, the station's Metal Department itself became a national act. WFCS earned the College Hard Rock Station of the Year Award and Chip McCabe was named Hard Rock Director of the Year by Gavin, a music industry magazine. We all felt a lot of pride in being nationally recognized.

Metalfests also took place in 2001, 2007, 2009 and 2015. From 1999 to 2000 the station did a few big pushes for membership and ended up with over 50 DJs, but there was a very high turnover. Some DJs only lasted one semester, so the station began accepting community volunteers.



The WFCS Metal Department in December 2000 during a staff meeting in the DiLoretto basement. Not all members could be identified. From left: Mike Polce (with gallon of water); Chip McCabe (hooded sweatshirt); Kevin Schremmer (beard, glasses); Brian Corrigan (kneeling); Art Barsch (crossed arms); Tony Espinoza (holding the "official" WFCS sledge hammer); Larry Mucci; and Christina Wojanowski (green jacket)

The other music departments--Alternative, Urban, Diversity and RPM--all had some excellent programming as well. It was great time to be involved with the club and to experience these exiting events. WFCS has given me a lot of great memories.

*Larry Mucci majored in communications and works at ESPN in Bristol doing master control for ESPN, ABC, and Disney-owned cable networks. He remains involved with WFCS as a community volunteer DJ and regularly attends live concerts.*



Filling up WFCS's new podcast studio from left, future alumni: Jared Burgess, '24; Sam Goode, '25; Nathan Czeremcha, '26; and Aidan Dyer, '25.

## Membership skyrockets from 13 to 84

### WFCS accommodates with second studio, one-hour shows

By JP Bonilla, WFCS general manager

In fall 2022, we had the most successful semester yet at WFCS: We signed on and trained 48 brand-new DJs, bringing WFCS to an all-time record of 84 members!

When I joined WFCS in fall 2021, there were just 13 members and we added 28 new members in the spring 2022 semester. We considered that growth amazing and we worked hard to be in the same ballpark for the fall. But with the success of the campus Club Fair, promotions at other CCSU events and the launch of our podcast studio, our outreach efforts exceeded all of our expectations and it created a fall 2022 semester that was one to remember.

*“Membership is huge, helped I think by both two-hour and one-hour timeslots, which allow for more shows,” noted professor Gil Gigliotti, WFCS faculty adviser. “The past few years the staff has done a great job of recruiting and brought back WFCS [from Covid] well before any other club.”*

The staff and DJs have created a welcoming and fun environment for everyone, making WFCS a club that people feel they should be a part of. Other reasons for the growth were DJ's inviting visitors to their shows and staff reaching out through social media. Nevertheless, the high morale of the station is one of the biggest reasons for the huge growth that we had during the fall semester.

As mentioned, the podcast studio is also a huge reason why our station membership soared. Upgrading the podcast studio has been one of our top priorities for the year. We added new speakers and soundproofing and more mics to accommodate more hosts and more guests. A lot of people loved this alternative to Studio A (WFCS's main studio) and it provided more opportunities for people to join WFCS. This has also been a great alternative for our Talk Department, as it gave them more of a platform with fewer restrictions and an opportunity to get even more creative with their shows.

It's been a great year at WFCS and we look forward to more amazing months to come.

*In addition to listening to WFCS on line, visit the following link to hear the station's podcasts:*

<https://open.spotify.com/show/1bojGHIXN19WOI2701hXps?si=LIK1r37rQyCQ92Jf9Qb7lw&nd=1>

## Of Note...

WFCS now has an exciting new look and it's found at [WFCSradio.com](https://wfcsradio.com). Developed by former General Manager Agatha Hueller and Technical Director Darren Palumbo, the station's new website was finally launched in November 2022 after months of meetings, planning and hard work. Check out the dashboard. It features the station's programming schedule, current staff and station news. Added is an alumni page recognizing former DJs and their contributions to the station.

-- JP Bonilla



## Final Note...

Have a story? Your fellow alumni would love to read it. What do you recall most about the radio club? Or maybe you were a listener and a CCSU event comes to mind. Please send your story to [raydiopk@aim.com](mailto:raydiopk@aim.com)