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**Vol. 14, Spring 2025**

## **Editor**

*Paul Koscak '73*

## **Contributors**

*Marcin Olechowski '03; Hilberto Depena'27; Gil Gigliotti*

## **Features**

■ *Radio Emka* ■ *Managing College Radio* ■ *Homecoming 2024*

## **Remembering Radio Emka**

By Marcin Olechowski '03

I hosted a variety show on WFCS that offered a mix of music, commentary and occasional visits from Central professors and community leaders. While other WFCS shows had similar formats, what made Radio Emka, as I named it, stand out was the program was presented in Polish. In addition, the show was frequently co-hosted by other Polish speaking guests. Marcin Grochal '02, Olga Budasz '03, Anna Chudy '02, Joanna Lubach '06, along with community volunteers Jacek Witkowski and Sebastian Czeczotka, were among the regulars who gave Radio Emka its lively give-and-take dialogue between songs. We were free spirits.

Launched in December 1999, the show had a good 13-year run. Radio Emka's emphasis on music and news from Poland also drew listeners from New Britain's large Polish community. The show was promoted in local Polish newspapers and through the Polish Club of CCSU. I received a lot of positive feedback. I learned there's now a Radio Emka show in Poland but I can't be certain it was inspired by my show. I'm now co-hosting "Polski Express," a



**Radio Emka thrived on its variety and co-hosts. From left: Marcin Olechowski '03, Anna Chudy '02 and Olga Budasz '03 made the line up for this show in 2000. Olga was also a champion swimmer and diver representing CCSU and Poland. In 2024 she was inducted into the CCSU Alumni Athletics Hall of Fame.**

Polish music and entertainment show each Sunday from 9 - 11 a.m. on Bristol's WPRX 1120 AM. View Radio Emka at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9nV23\\_HmXkU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9nV23_HmXkU)

*Marcin Olechowski is a board administrator at the Connecticut Health Insurance Exchange.*

## Mark your calendar for college radio history

College radio has an interesting history, promising future and unique programming not found in commercial broadcasting. Those points and more will be highlighted by Katherine Jewell, a college radio historian and history professor at Fitchburg State University who once worked as a college radio DJ. This initial lecture, which is slated to become an annual event, is sponsored by the CCSU Media Board and is open to the public.

APRIL 24, 6 P.M. Sprague/Carleton RM  
Central Student Ctr.  
Free Admission

**LIVE**  
FROM THE  
UNDERGROUND  
A History of College Radio  
KATHERINE BYE JEWELL

**Katherine Jewell**  
COLLEGE RADIO HISTORIAN

SPONSORS:

*Editor's note: Founded in the fall of 1997, the CCSU Media Board manages the fees paid by every undergraduate to support student media. They are WFCS, The Recorder campus newspaper and the Helix, a literary magazine. The general manager of WFCS, managing editor of the Recorder, editor of the Helix, the faculty advisers of those organizations and a student member from each of those organizations make up the board. The board has no editorial oversight but it can provide guidance in dealing with editorial or public relations issues.*

## A few thoughts on college station management

By Gil Gigliotti



**Gil Gigliotti hosts "Frank, Gil and Friends" on WFCS.**

Many college radio stations around the country are staffed by students but often run by paid professionals or controlled by an academic department (such as Communication). While there's much to be said for those models, since they offer more consistency from year to year, each also yields control that a student-run club has. At WFCS, a club unstaffed by professionals and unaffiliated with any academic department, it is the students who decide everything about the station. That's the beauty about having a club – what it may lose in consistency, it gains in the opportunities for everyone to learn more due to the increased responsibility they bear.

At WFCS, we're programming and producing every day of the week, even during breaks and throughout the summer. That volume of programming is challenging, especially given that WFCS is a club. Looking ahead, early on in 2025 we still have plenty of slots to fill from fall graduation vacancies, while the station leadership is working on improving training and continued station promotion. After all, the more Central students there are who know about WFCS, the more impact we can have.

*Gil Gigliotti, CCSU professor of English and Latin, is the WFCS faculty adviser. He also hosts "Frank, Gil and Friends," a Frank Sinatra retrospective show every Tuesday from 8 – 10 a.m., airing since 1993.*

## Flashback to 1971



**Rock 'n roll 'n on WCCS with DJ Wendy Mayer '73. WCCS 670 AM broadcasted from low power transmitters positioned in campus buildings, connected to the studio by telephone lines. The signal radiated throughout campus and into the surrounding neighborhoods. However, if you drove down nearby streets flanked by telephone lines, you could listen on your car radio.**

the website needs to be a place where listeners can engage, not just a site for staff to check on schedules. The website was relaunched in November 2022 with a new opening page and a section for Radio Club alumni that recognizes former DJs and their contributions to the station.

We're also looking to replenish club membership from staff who graduated. Membership peaked in 2022 with 84 students, making the Radio Club the largest campus organization. Now the club has about 40 members. In 2021, WFCS was recognized by the Student Union Board of Governors as the university's Outstanding Student Organization. Students or alumni interested in doing a show or participating in the Artist Showcase should call the WFCS office at (860) 832-1883.

## GM looks back – and ahead for 2025

By Hilberto Depena '27

Thirteen musical artists participated in the WFCS-sponsored Artists Showcase in November. Planning for the two-day event began in the summer of 2024 for this initial show that also helped promote the station. WFCS is sponsoring another talent show in April, but on a much smaller scale, while the November 2025 Artists Showcase is now being planned. The showcase highlights local musical talent and is open to alumni. I'm also focused on improving the WFCS website to make it more interactive. The

*Hilberto Depena is the WFCS general manager. A business major with a music minor, he was previously the station's director of development and hip hop director.*

## WFCS alumni, 2024 homecoming



**Kneeling from Left: Shaine Frederick '18; Peter Varhol, community volunteer; Nikita Khrenov '16; Standing, front row from left: Frank Vesci '86; McKensi Gudrian '21; Samantha Duncan '20; Alyssa Rankin '15 (holding future alumni, son, JT!); John Sarra '73; Eve Sarra '74; Robb Warner '78; Dianne Zareski '74; Bill Pearse '75; Keith Hall '78; Art Passaro '72; Paul Koscak '73; Standing, back row from left: Savannah Wallingford '24; Nick Brazil '19; Shannon Kelly '15; Kyle Miller '18; Randy Shamber '84; Andrew Kelley '15; Elaine Miner '84; Guy Esposito '85; Tom Larson '75**

## WFCS alumni family grows at homecoming

The gods of Mt. Olympus smiled on Central's 2024 late-season homecoming, rewarding WFCS alumni with an amazing August-like day during the two-day November event. Friday, Nov. 1, soared to a record-setting 82 degrees with a warm breeze and blazing sun. Saturday, Nov. 2, peaked at 60 degrees, still about 20 degrees above normal November temperatures, according to AccuWeather records.

Saturday morning's homecoming at the radio station welcomed back 27 alumni from the early 1970s to the most recent grads for coffee, conversation and camaraderie. WFCS's alumni morning gathering is homecoming's first event that day. Radio Club alumni began arriving at 8:30 a.m. as alumni shows kicked off thanks to former DJs Robb Warner, Randy Shamber, Marcin Olechowski, Paul Koscak, Frank Vesci and Kyle Miller.



**Randy Shamber '84, aka "Uncle John" during his show in the early 1980s, takes to the air during homecoming 2024.**

Outside the studio, the station's lobby, record library and offices filled with visitors who traded stories and anecdotes from years past, recapturing at least for a few hours the magic of those undergraduate years when you dropped by the station several times per day to meet and mingle or do a show. While the music has evolved and the equipment has advanced over the years, what never changed are the Radio Club's social ties that shaped life at Central and forged lasting memories and life-long friendships.

Special thanks go to former WFCS General Manager Aidan Dyer for assisting with the homecoming, the WFCS staff who provided their air time and to Robbie Jost, assistant director of alumni relations, for providing refreshments. And finally a note of thanks to everyone who stopped by – you produced a fun and successful get together.

## Of Note...



**A few WFCS alumni had an impromptu get together in June during Peter Varhol's smooth jazz morning show and then off to lunch at the Back Nine in New Britain. From left: Paul Koscak, "Bungalow" Bill Walsh, Steve Strinie, Vicki Minervino, and Peter Varhol.**

**Bill's "Sunday Spectrum" show on WFCS aired 40 years. Steve has been broadcasting at the station 47 years and Peter has been on the air nearly 15 years. Vicki held WFCS positions as director of development, public relations director and general manager before graduating in 2019. Paul broadcasted from 1970 – 1973 on both WCCS and WFCS and later worked in commercial radio and television.**

## Final Note...

Let's do this June gathering again! All WFCS alumni and friends are invited to join Peter Varhol's show on June 16 at 10 a.m. Afterwards, we'll head to Back Nine for lunch. Plan on returning to campus at 5:30 p.m. for the annual CCSU alumni meeting, which also takes place June 16 in the Student Center, Berlin Hall.