Brian Craig—**Built for Radio**

**WEVL’s Program Director**

Brian Craig, WEVL’s Program Director

A pure-stock Memphian (“born, raised, schooled here, I’ve never lived anywhere else”), WEVL Program Director Brian Craig radiates honesty and quiet intelligence. He’s been associated with the station for over 35 years, the last 28 of which as one of its only two full-time employees. Brian, along with station manager Judy Dorsey, is the brains, sweat, and blood behind WEVL.

Brian was built for radio. An avid broadcast fan since he can remember (“I even mounted a radio on my bike when I was 6, that’s how into radio I was,” he recalls), he spent most nights of his childhood with his ear literally attached to his AM transistor radio, listening to stations from such far-away places as St. Louis (KMOX), Chicago (WLS), Nashville (WSM), and New Orleans (WWL). “I found it captivating—other cities’ commercials and local news, the bizarre weather.” In short, the boy was taken in by the strangeness and yet potential closeness of the whole world out there, captured with the magic only late-night radio can provide. “I even still have a picture of me as a boy in bed with my radio,” he says.

Brian first heard about WEVL from a program guide he’d picked up at the local public library. But the station’s then modest 10-watt signal could not reach his East Memphis neighborhood. An inspired Christmas gift from his parents in the form of a top of the line Panasonic AM/FM radio solved this: the new set captured WEVL. Loud. Clear.

One day, he and a friend took a bus from East Memphis all the way to the Exchange Building downtown where WEVL was located at the time. “I’m 15, my friend is only 14. The woman who was on the air comes out and tells us: ‘So glad to see you guys. I’ve got a horrible headache and I’m going home to take some drugs. You’re next.’ Not sure who she thought we were exactly. Regardless, we were in charge and so on the air we went,” Brian says. “My friend was an audio geek type, and I had run sound at church so we figured things out. We found the bluegrass section of the station’s library, played Bill Monroe and Flatt & Scruggs records. I’m sure it was the worst radio moment ever, but we pulled it off.”

He kept listening.

“My favorite show back then was by Joe Parrish, Monday nights, 8-10. Joe was from the Big Band Era and told stories and played records,” he says.

Emboldened by their first DJ stint, the two kids soon applied for a regular show, which as crazy as it seems, they were granted. “At the time they had a programming committee. I have no idea how I got appointed to that, but I was and eventually I became the chairperson of the committee. Still a teenager.”

By 1983, the station had applied to broadcast a more powerful signal. With the funds for construction not yet raised, WEVL was forced off the air. Most volunteers drifted away, but Judy and Brian picked up the gauntlet and kept the battle alive, producing a multitude of fundraising events.

“In ’86 we were broadcasting again,” he continues, “and I returned as head of the programming committee. We eventually received a grant which enabled us to hire a program director. I took over that job when the first person we’d hired left.”

“At most stations, a PD is in charge of all that goes on the air, including the music. The situation at WEVL is slightly different,” he explains. “We trust all our volunteer programmers/on-air volunteers to pick their own playlists, so I actually do not program the station per se. But Judy and I select the programmers, and I am responsible for training them, making sure they (and we) comply with all FCC regulations, stay on top of equipment maintenance and upgrades. I also have to deal with all the record labels that send us new releases for potential WEVL airplay.”

“I am too busy to have a weekly show anymore,” he laments, “but I still get to fill in quite regularly.” And while he modestly suggests he is not truly involved with minute-by-minute programming decisions, the eclectic nature of his taste and deep musical culture are clearly reflected in the station’s adventurous programming.

Brian is a serious record collector, a dedicated music lover fluent in most idioms and sub-genres of American music. He is also the historian for the Tennessee Radio Hall of Fame and has given talks about the significance of local radio to groups across Tennessee and at the Library of Congress.

In his spare time, he has memorized just about every chart in the last 50 years, and when not at the station can be found at home surrounded by his rich trove of media collectibles, including a near complete set of TV Guide. (In case you are searching for that rare Bewitched cover, there is good chance that Brian has it stashed away somewhere in his lair.)

Brian says the best part of his job at WEVL is “being able to work with music and with a diverse cast of volunteers who are all really into music.”

The worst? “The fact that we are always chasing after money.”

Looking back at the last couple of decades, Brian voices great gratitude for having been associated with the late Dee “Cap’n Pete” Henderson and his much-loved *Blues Cruise* broadcasts.

“Here was somebody who grew up in Mississippi, whose whole life was the blues, and to be able to share his voice and knowledge remains a great source of pride. Same thing for Bashful Bob and country music.”

Looking ahead, Brian sees his and WEVL’s most important challenge as “making sure that WEVL stays relevant for the next generation of listeners. I’d like to see more younger people get involved with the station.” Until then, WEVL is in Brian’s most capable hands.
Sunday

6:00 am The Best of Singing in Dixie
6:30 am Welcome to the Working Week
7:00 am My Pet Rock Show
7:30 am Bubblegum Trash
8:00 am The Many Moons of Ben Vaughn
8:30 am My Morning Mixtape
9:00 am River City Revelle
9:30 am Memphis Mystery Train
10:00 am Blues Today
10:30 am Strands of the Celtic Knot

Monday

6:00 am The Best of Singing in Dixie
6:30 am Welcome to the Working Week
7:00 am My Pet Rock Show
7:30 am Bubblegum Trash
8:00 am The Many Moons of Ben Vaughn
8:30 am My Morning Mixtape
9:00 am River City Revelle
9:30 am Memphis Mystery Train
10:00 am Blues Today
10:30 am Strands of the Celtic Knot

Tuesday

6:00 am The Best of Singing in Dixie
6:30 am Welcome to the Working Week
7:00 am My Pet Rock Show
7:30 am Bubblegum Trash
8:00 am The Many Moons of Ben Vaughn
8:30 am My Morning Mixtape
9:00 am River City Revelle
9:30 am Memphis Mystery Train
10:00 am Blues Today
10:30 am Strands of the Celtic Knot

Wednesday

6:00 am The Best of Singing in Dixie
6:30 am Welcome to the Working Week
7:00 am My Pet Rock Show
7:30 am Bubblegum Trash
8:00 am The Many Moons of Ben Vaughn
8:30 am My Morning Mixtape
9:00 am River City Revelle
9:30 am Memphis Mystery Train
10:00 am Blues Today
10:30 am Strands of the Celtic Knot

Thursday

6:00 am The Best of Singing in Dixie
6:30 am Welcome to the Working Week
7:00 am My Pet Rock Show
7:30 am Bubblegum Trash
8:00 am The Many Moons of Ben Vaughn
8:30 am My Morning Mixtape
9:00 am River City Revelle
9:30 am Memphis Mystery Train
10:00 am Blues Today
10:30 am Strands of the Celtic Knot

Friday

6:00 am The Best of Singing in Dixie
6:30 am Welcome to the Working Week
7:00 am My Pet Rock Show
7:30 am Bubblegum Trash
8:00 am The Many Moons of Ben Vaughn
8:30 am My Morning Mixtape
9:00 am River City Revelle
9:30 am Memphis Mystery Train
10:00 am Blues Today
10:30 am Strands of the Celtic Knot

Saturday

6:00 am The Best of Singing in Dixie
6:30 am Welcome to the Working Week
7:00 am My Pet Rock Show
7:30 am Bubblegum Trash
8:00 am The Many Moons of Ben Vaughn
8:30 am My Morning Mixtape
9:00 am River City Revelle
9:30 am Memphis Mystery Train
10:00 am Blues Today
10:30 am Strands of the Celtic Knot

MORNING

6:00 am The Best of Singing in Dixie
6:30 am Welcome to the Working Week
7:00 am My Pet Rock Show
7:30 am Bubblegum Trash
8:00 am The Many Moons of Ben Vaughn
8:30 am My Morning Mixtape
9:00 am River City Revelle
9:30 am Memphis Mystery Train
10:00 am Blues Today
10:30 am Strands of the Celtic Knot

AFTERNOON

7:00 am The 1st Church of Rock!
7:30 am Reggae Millennium
8:00 am World Music Dance Party
8:30 am Out on the Side
9:00 am Hillbilly Jazz
9:30 am Back to the Country
10:00 am The Modern World
10:30 am Through the Cracks

EVENING

8:00 pm FlowRadio
8:30 pm South Main Soul Club
9:00 pm Swing Shift Shuffle
9:30 pm The Deep Blues Show
10:00 pm The Many Moons of Ben Vaughn
10:30 pm Soul Stew
11:00 pm Against the Grain

WEVL PROGRAM GUIDE november–december 2020
WEVL PROGRAM GUIDE november–december 2020
Double Your Contribution to WEVL!

If you work for or are retired from one of the companies listed below, your employer may match your donation of $25 or more.


See your employment or personnel office or company website to obtain a matching gift form.

Membership/Change of Address Form

- I want to support WEVL today. Sign me up.
- I am already supporting WEVL, but my address has changed. New Address below.

NAME
ADDRESS
CITY STATE ZIP
TELEPHONE E-MAIL ADDRESS
FAVORITE PROGRAMS / COMMENTS
CREDIT CARD #: EXP. DATE
- $500 Benefactor
- $120 Patron
- $75 Family
- $40 Individual
- $____ Other
- Discover
- VISA
- MasterCard

For Members Only

Help WEVL save $$ and trees! Get the program guide by e-mail as an attached PDF file. Just send a message to wevl@wevl.org with Email Program Guide as the subject.

What Members Receive

For 44 years WEVL has been providing the Mid-South with volunteer programming that is diverse, educational, fun, and different from anything else you will hear on the air. Become a member of WEVL and support an alternative voice in Memphis area radio by making a donation of $40 or more. In return, you will receive a WEVL bumper sticker and a year’s subscription to the WEVL Program Guide—plus your donation is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Send in your membership today!

WEVL • P.O. Box 40952 • Memphis, TN 38174 • (901) 528-0560

If you move, please return the form above with your new address. The Post Office will not forward guides and will charge us to return the guide with a corrected address.