

Monmouth College FM Station Is Year Old

WEST LONG BRANCH — The first student-operated Monmouth College radio station went on the air in 1962. It was known as WRMC and it was on the AM band.

Over the years, the station went through various transitions, changed its call letters, and finally, a year ago today, WMCX-FM was unveiled.

In its present incarnation, the Monmouth station comes across somewhere in the middle of WNEW-FM, a progressive rock station, and WBAI, a listener-sponsored station. Progressive rock plays the major role in WMCX programming, but station personnel also rely a great deal on community affairs and local news happenings.

Despite the station's mere 10 watts, Lee Mrowicki, a Sea Girt senior and program director, remarks, if slightly facetiously, that the station has more than 200,000 potential listeners.

"WE HAVE 214,000 potential listeners," Mrowicki said, "if every one in the county listens . . . and then our lights start to dim."

Station officials would like to increase wattage, but, at present, there are too many obstacles. There are complex legal technicalities to deal with, but the greatest hurdle is the financial one.

Unlike Brookdale Community College's WBJB, WMCX cannot rely on the state for yearly grants. Additionally, Monmouth's station has no full-time professional employees. There are faculty advisers, but the station is totally student operated.

This year, the college put up \$3,500 for WMCX. An additional \$5,000 was pulled in from outside solicitations from area businesses.

Recently, the station at 88.1 on the FM dial held its first "stereothon." During 57 hours of non-stop programming, nearly \$2,300 was raised in public pledges. Mrowicki expects the station will convert from mono to stereo within the next few months.

DESPITE SOME MONEY problems, WMCX is equipped with several mod-

See COLLEGE Page C5



Conferring on radio-type things are student heads of Monmouth College's radio station (left to right)

Lee Mrowicki, Steven Galante, Steven Lubetkin and Bill Stewart. The station is a year old today.

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College FM Station Year Old Today

(From Page C1)

ern offices and studios. Its record album library numbers close to 5,000— not counting several hundred single recordings.

Of most importance, however, is the station's air qualities. It may be a student-operated station, but it comes across as professionally as most commercial rock stations. Additionally, the music played and the on-the-air personalities are a lot more pleasing than the typical Top 40 announcers.

"It is not a hobby," points out Tom Dorick, a faculty advisor and former staff announcer for WJLK, Radio Voice of the Asbury Park Press. "Most of the students affiliated with MCX plan careers in communications.

Problems Disrupt Theater

SHREWSBURY — Dinner-

"WMCX has no full-time employes," Dorick continued. "It is up to the students to originate, produce and program everything that is aired. In itself, this is not unlike most other college radio stations, but considering the fact that every decision comes from a student, then you can appreciate the burdens and responsibilities that are placed on these young men and women."

AS DORICK SAID, many of the students questioned do hope to go on to communication careers.

Mrowicki is already doing technical work for WJLK. Steven Lubetkin, an Oceanport freshman acting as production director, hopes for a radio career. Presently, he is doing commercials for cable TV. WMCX business representative Bill Stewart, a sophomore from Upper Saddle River, is planning on an engineering career.

Chief announcer Steven Galante, Interlaken, isn't as certain as the others, but jokingly says, "if the big break comes along, I'll take

over Scott Muni's position."

The atmosphere at WMCX is one of casual professionalism. The hallways are peppered with photos and posters of rock stars. Many of the staff members wear jeans, some sport WMCX T-shirts.

As for freedom on the air, Galante says it goes just so far.

"We are more or less a free-form radio station, but we're not that free," he says. What he means is that most anything can be said on the air, but not played. WMCX, for the time being anyway, is sticking with progressive rock.

MROWICKI EXPLAINS that the college station has changed over the years along with the radio business. Progressive rock is big now, but, who knows, next year it could be bouzouki music.

Not long ago, Brookdale Community College launched a student station, WBJB, and a story in the Press, coinciding with the station's debut, went over less than

enthusiastically with MCX staffers.

BJB operates on 2,250 watts, compared to Monmouth's 10, and MCX staffers wanted it known that wattage doesn't necessarily mean one station is better — or better equipped — than another.

Lubetkin says Brookdale has "two studios and a broom closet for a newsroom" compared to MCX's seven studios and newsroom.

"I don't care if all you've got is a broom closet," Mrowicki adds. "It's what comes out which is important."

But, Mrowicki adds of BJB: "They may have power, but I can't pick them up in Sea Girt. The signal drifts."

THE CONVERSATION continues and Galante ends it, saying, "I want us to be friendly with BJB. I don't want to belittle them. If someone belittles them on the air, I'll throw him off. It's unprofessional."

Make a date

Mrowicki estimates MCX's audience is comprised of about 60 per cent high school students and the rest college students and older. Recently, the listening public was given a treat with the free-wheeling weekend "stereothon," which was filled with music, fun, requests for money and a live concert by Barnaby Bye, a Long Island rock group.

The "stereothon" was promoted on MCX by just about every big name Metropolitan area radio personality — from Bob and Ray and William B. Williams to Jonathan Schwartz and Murray the K. Mrowicki had sent letters to about 40 radio personalities and was pleased when nearly all of them responded, saying they would do on-the-air promos for the event.

Presently, there are 37 MCX employes and while student advisor Dorick talks of their "burdens and responsibilities," one other thing is distinctly clear: They're having a good time.