

Who Is.....Ray Thomas?

By Eneea Roslisha Williams

"You're only as good as your last show," a quote which Ray Thomas teaches his students.

Thomas, a well-known radio personality, is Fayetteville State University's Bronco i-Radio adviser.

Thomas collaborated with Ron Martin, chief engineer and assistant manager at 91.9 WFSS public radio station, and came up with the concept of creating an internet radio station. Bronco i-radio streams both audio and video over the internet. The site was officially launched in September 2011 with the talk show "The Bottom Line."

Bronco i-Radio does not just stop at internet radio but it includes television, talk shows, t-shirts, products and a record label. Bronco i-Radio also has plans to work with The Voice and launch an internet magazine.

Each component of the Bronco i-Radio - music, talk radio, and news - are all important to the listeners, said Thomas. The concept of internet radio is what communication scholars call media-convergence. It is an example of the changing media climate.

Internet radio allows anyone that has internet access the ability to listen. Internet radio also uses social networking to help it become an all-inclusive brand. However, while internet radio makes it possible for radio stations to broadcast on a global platform, "the only down-side is it has no signal," unlike terrestrial (traditional) radio stations, said Thomas.

In addition to streaming music and other programming over the internet, Bronco i-Radio was created to provide training to students interested in pursuing a career in radio. Bronco i-Radio has a state-of-the-art studio with capabilities for hands-on learning, round table discussions, guest artists, and community support.

"The kids were basically pretending and I wanted to expose them to hands on experience," said Thomas.

The state-of-the-art studio consists of soundproof walls and high quality sound equipment. Located in the telecommunications building, the studio is a central teaching tool for FSU's Communication department.

"Bronco i-Radio has given students another way to practice and critique their skills," said Joe Ross, a Communication professor and the adviser of WFSS 91.9 public radio.

Martin, who works alongside Thomas to make Bronco i-Radio possible, said "Thomas is very professional. He's great with the students and often stays late with the students if they need help."

Students also appreciate Thomas' commitment and philosophy. "Ray has taught me to stop using crutch words," said FSU student Sidney McClettie.

"He's a perfectionist. He puts you in situations where you have to make managerial decisions and use him as a last resort."

Thomas, who has been in the radio business for 30 years, is very passionate about radio. "I believe in positive change," said Thomas. "And, you can change the world with your voice."

Thomas said his mother always told him to make sure that whatever career he chose he was passionate about it because then it no longer became a job. For Thomas, radio is not a job but a simple enjoyment.

Thomas said, "Being on-air is the best part, because you work all day on the little things like sound check but being on-air is your performance piece."

Thomas' office is filled CDs. There is paperwork on the



courtesy of RayThomas TheBrand

desk, which indicates there is work to be done. His phone is consistently ringing. T-shirts hang from the ceiling with quotes that Thomas consistently says. He wears the Bronco i-Radio hat proudly. "I have strong spiritual foundation," which is something not many people know about Thomas. "It is the core of my foundation."

Many students look to Thomas as a role model, but Thomas offers an alternative suggestion.

"Do not aspire to be like me," Thomas said. If you see qualities that you like then take some of them, but carve your own niche. Aspire to be the best you."

Spring Break: Destinations

By Ta'Meka Bröland

Are you itching to get away for spring break, but don't have unlimited funds at your disposal, and feel that you can't do anything?

Don't get mad. Get glad, because you're in luck.

There are plenty of possibilities for spring break if you only take your time and look.

Fortunately for you, some of the hard work is done. Now all you have to do is choose one that strikes an interest.

Enjoy!!!

Locally:

(Fayetteville, NC)

Open Mic

March 6 @8pm
The Rock Shop Music Hall

Kite Day by Will Hildenbrand

March 8 @10am
Barnes & Nobles

In State:

(Greensboro, NC)

Trey Songz w/ Big Sean

March 4 @ 7:30 pm
Greensboro Coliseum Complex

Mike Epps "I'm Still Standing" Tour

March 9 @8pm
Greensboro Coliseum
Admission \$39.50/49.50

Roots Rock Reggae

March 9 @9pm
Zion Bar and Grille
5601 Roanne Way
Sahara reggae band performs

Karaoke

by SoCal Entertainment
March 10 @ 10pm
Ham's Brass field

(High Point, NC)

The Peking Acrobats

March 9 @8pm
High Point Theatre
Admissions \$30/25

(Lumberton, NC)

Rumba on the Lumber

March 3 @11am
* All day event
(Festival includes Chili cook-off, family fun mile, 5k road race, live music, kidz zone, and much more)

(Raleigh, NC)

Downtown Raleigh First Friday

First Friday of every month
March 2 @6pm
Free Admission

Fold Back Concert

March 4 @6pm
218 South Blount Street
Free Admission

Casting Crowns Concert

March 9 @7pm
RBC Admissions \$23/\$27/\$43
(Prices increase \$5 day of show)

(Old fort, NC)

Arts Mart

March 3 @ 10am - 4pm
(Locally created arts and crafts displayed inside the historic Old Fort depot. Chat w/ creator while you shop. Includes wood work, and live demonstrations)

(Roanoke Rapids, NC)

March Music Madness

March 3 @ 10am-9pm
Becker Village Mall
1620 E. 10th Street
Free Admission
(Live music performing center stage all day on Saturday, and a variety of vendors offering crafts and food)